The Armenians and the Fall of the Ottoman Empire

After Genocide, 1918–1923

Ari Şekeryan

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The Armistice of Mudros was signed on 30 October 1918 and on the morning of 13 November 1918 a mighty fleet of battleships from Britain, France, Italy, and Greece sailed to Istanbul and dropped anchor without encountering resistance. This day marked the beginning of the end of the Ottoman Empire, a dissolution that would bring great suffering and chaos but also new opportunities for all Ottomans, Muslim and non-Muslim alike. Drawing upon a previously untouched collection of Armenian and Ottoman Turkish primary sources, Ari Şekeryan considers these understudied post-war years. Examining the Armenian community as they emerged from the aftermath of war and genocide, Şekeryan outlines their shifting political position and the strategies they used to survive this turbulent period. By focusing on the Ottoman Armistice (1918–23), Şekeryan illuminates an oft-neglected period in history and develops a new case study for understanding the political reactions of ethnic groups to the fall of empires and nation-states.

ARI ŞEKERYAN received his PhD from the University of Oxford in 2018 and has since held positions at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, California State University–Fresno, the University of Michigan–Ann Arbor, and the University of Cambridge. He is currently a visiting research scholar affiliated to the Center for Armenian Studies at the University of Michigan–Ann Arbor. His articles have been published in the *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, *Turkish Studies*, the *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association*, and *War in History*.

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To Şila and Ara

Contents

Figures

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Maps

Tables

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Notes on Language

I use the Library of Congress's transliteration system for Armenian names throughout the book. However, in the interest of simplification for readers, I have omitted diacritics (except ě) and written surname suffixes as '-ian' or '-yan' rather than '-ean' – for example, Zhamgochyan instead of Zhamgoch'ean.

In Turkish, words are pluralised with the suffixes '-lar' or '-ler', depending on the ending of the noun in question. For example, *kaymakam* becomes *kaymakamlar* and *vali* becomes *valiler*. To avoid confusion among readers who do not know Turkish, I have pluralised nouns with the addition of an 's'. If the first instance of the Turkish word occurs in the plural, the Turkish word is italicised and a non-italicised 's' is added ('*kaymakam*s'). Subsequent appearances of the pluralised word contain no italics ('kaymakams').

Introduction

On the morning of 13 November 1918, a mighty fleet of battleships, cruisers, destroyers, and dreadnoughts carrying the flags of the British Empire, France, Italy, and Greece sailed to the Ottoman capital, Istanbul. While they passed through the Dardanelles, where they had met an unexpected defeat three years prior, the Ottoman coastal artillery remained silent. The fleet sailed through the Marmara Sea and dropped anchor without encountering resistance upon its arrival at the gates of Istanbul. While the capital's Ottoman Armenians and Romioi (Greek Orthodox Christians)[1] rushed to the shore to celebrate the Allied fleet's arrival, it was a 'black day' for the Muslim population, which saw the parading Allied fleet as another humiliation for a Muslim empire that had ruled vast tracts in south-east Europe, North Africa, the Middle East, and Asia Minor for centuries. While Christian Armenians hugged and proclaimed '*Krisdos Haryaw I Merelots!*' ('Christ is risen!') in the streets of the Pera neighbourhood to celebrate the arrival of the Allied fleet – equating its arrival with their own survival, after witnessing the deportations and massacres during wartime – there was silence and grief among the Ottoman Muslims. When the French General Louis Franchet d'Espèrey marched ceremonially on the Grande Rue de Péra (now İstiklal Caddesi) in February 1919, as if he had conquered the city, famed Ottoman author Süleyman Nazif, who witnessed the ceremony, wrote in the Ottoman Turkish paper *Hadisat* (The Events) the day after that it was a 'black day' for the Ottoman Muslims and criticised the gloating of non-Muslim Ottomans.[2] For the first time in six centuries, there were

[1] Throughout the book, I use Romioi (Rum) for the Greek Orthodox Christian communities of Anatolia and Istanbul, who were subjects of the Ottoman Empire.

[2] Edhem Eldem, 'Tarihte Gerçek Konusunda Küçük Bir Araştırma: İstanbul'un Beyaz Atlı Fatihi' [A Little Research on Reality in History: The Conqueror of Istanbul on a White Horse], *Toplumsal Tarih*, 261 (2015).

foreign troops in the streets of the capital. This day marked the beginning of the end of the Ottoman Empire, a dissolution that would bring great suffering and chaos but also new opportunities for all Ottomans, both Muslim and non-Muslim.

. . .

This book will focus on a non-Muslim community in the Ottoman Empire, the Armenians, to understand how it survived through the stormy post-war years, as an empire heaved its final breaths. From the beginning of the Armistice years, an atmosphere of insecurity shaped the political position of Ottoman Armenians. Policymakers – political party leaders, the press, elected members of the Armenian National Assembly, and prominent opinion leaders – together with the Armenian Patriarchate devised a collective political strategy to ensure the survival of their community. Initially, Ottoman Armenians developed a nationalist approach that sought unification with their compatriots in the Caucasus. However, following the defeat of the Greek army by Turkish Nationalist troops in Anatolia in 1922, the collective strategy among those Ottoman Armenians who stayed in Istanbul and Anatolia was revised significantly. Once it was clear that the Turkish Nationalists would claim victory, they sought reconciliation and peace with the Turkish majority. This reconciliation was only possible through the acceptance of Turkish superiority by the Turkish Armenians – to choose to remain within the lands of what would become the Republic of Turkey was to pledge loyalty to the newly established Nationalist government in Ankara, as a means of guaranteeing personal safety. A comprehensive analysis of newspapers of the period illustrates this evolution of public opinion among Ottoman Armenians. This transformation of the political position among Ottoman Armenians is at the core of this book.

I analyse the transformation of the Ottoman Armenian political position and the impacts of social and political developments of the period on the Ottoman Armenian community by examining primary sources from the Ottoman Turkish and Ottoman Armenian press. I argue that Ottoman Armenians struggled to reorganise their political and social lives after the wartime genocide, choosing to establish alliances with the Allied Powers to create an independent 'Western Armenia' to ultimately unite with the existing Armenian state in the Caucasus. This shared vision among Ottoman Armenians crystallised

a new political agenda, which I call the collective political position of Ottoman Armenians.

I argue that the Armenian press as an instrument of the public sphere played a crucial role in the subsequent transformation of Ottoman Armenians' political position. In this atmosphere of insecurity, the Ottoman Armenian community shifted its policy towards rehabilitating the Turkish–Armenian relationship, especially following the defeats of the Armenian state in the Caucasus in 1920 and the Greek army in Anatolia in 1922. In the process of reorienting their political position, the Armenian newspapers played a vital role as the most influential policy-making vehicles of society. Two theoretical concepts, ethnic bargaining and the security dilemma, provide a rational framework to better understand the process of political transformation.

In the recent literature on ethnic conflicts, especially 'ethnic bargaining', scholars have argued that minority groups may be radicalised by the signals of behavioural intent from the host state or from a third state.[3] Accordingly, if the host state demonstrates an aggressive approach towards an ethnic minority group, the radicalisation of that group is more likely. Furthermore, if there is an intervention by a third state on behalf of the ethnic minority's rights, the possibility of the radicalisation of the group further increases.[4]

Erin K. Jenne, in her authoritative study, utilises the theory of ethnic bargaining in understanding the reasons behind minority mobilisation. As she describes, minorities update their beliefs and political positions periodically over time, following signals they receive from host states or kin states.[5] Hungarian minority groups in Slovakia and Romania, for instance, became more vocal in calling for their rights when Hungary showed patronage and sent signals of protection in the 1990s.[6] In 1992, when the Hungarian government called on Slovakia to agree to

[3] For the ethnic bargaining method, see Erin K. Jenne, *Ethnic Bargaining: The Paradox of Minority Empowerment* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2007), 53; Erin K. Jenne, Stephen M. Saideman, and Will Lowe, 'Separatism as a Bargaining Posture: The Role of Leverage in Minority Radicalization', *Journal of Peace Research* 44(5) (2007); Erin K. Jenne, 'A Bargaining Theory of Minority Demands: Explaining the Dog That Did Not Bite in 1990s Yugoslavia', *International Studies Quarterly* 48(4) (2004); Dan Reiter, 'Exploring the Bargaining Model of War', *Perspectives on Politics* 1(1) (2003), 27–43; Rupen Cetinyan, 'Ethnic Bargaining in the Shadow of Third-Party Intervention', *International Organization* 56 (Summer 2002), 645–77.

[4] Jenne, *Ethnic Bargaining*, 95. [5] Ibid., 53. [6] Ibid., 97–116.

the principles of minority self-government, the Hungarian community in Slovakia increased its demands. In Romania as well, before the Hungarian government intervened on behalf of the minority in 1992, Hungarian representatives had pursued more moderate goals. However, after recognising the Hungarian state's support, the Hungarian community in Romania also raised its expectations.[7] The Hungarian leadership's secessionist demands in Romania came to an end after Romania and Hungary signed a bilateral agreement. Thus, when the 'external support' disappeared, Hungarians in Romania accommodated the host state.[8]

I argue that the collective behaviour of the Armenian community during the Armistice years can be better contextualised by utilising the theory of ethnic bargaining. Third states – the Allied Powers, in this case – intervened in the conflict on behalf of Armenians during the Armistice years when the Ottoman state enacted its various oppressive policies, thus meeting the 'external support' criteria. In applying the ethnic bargaining theory to the case of Ottoman Armenians in 1918–23, however, one should avoid anachronistic mistakes, especially when using the term 'minority'. In the case of Ottoman Armenians, it is important to note that Armenians were tolerated as *dhimmi*s (non-Muslims) within the Ottoman millet (religious community) system and the concepts of 'minority' and 'majority' did not exist until the 1920s. Even though the Ottoman state granted certain rights to the Ottoman Armenians – such as religious freedom, the right to have Armenian schools, as well as the right to publish books and newspapers in Armenian – Ottoman Armenians still remained a tolerated, subordinated, non-dominant group within the Empire, not because they were accepted as minorities but because they were non-Muslims.[9] Thus, naming the Ottoman Armenian community as a minority group and the Ottoman Muslims as a majority group would be an anachronistic mistake when discussing the communities in the Ottoman Empire, especially before the twentieth century. However, this book analyses the Ottoman Armenian community within a post-World War I context, at a time when nation-states were being formed around the world and the League of Nations, which for the first time introduced the notion of minority rights, was established. The Armenians were seen by

[7] Ibid., 121–2. [8] Ibid., 123.
[9] Benjamin Thomas White, *The Emergence of Minorities in the Middle East: The Politics of Community in French Mandate Syria* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011), 31–2.

the world community as a 'nation' which deserved to establish a nation-state, so it would not be a totally anachronistic mistake to use the notion of 'minority' in reference to the Ottoman Armenians during the Armistice period (1918–23). Keeping this in mind, throughout the book, when referencing Ottoman Armenians, I use the concepts 'non-dominant group' and 'minority' interchangeably, still using the latter only in quotes. When I use the term 'minority' for Ottoman Armenians, I am implying their post-genocide numerical inferiority to the Empire's Ottoman Muslim population in Anatolia.

Reactions similar to those of the Ottoman Armenians can be seen in studies of other ethnic conflicts in recent decades. For instance, ethnic Hungarians in the Vojvodina region of Yugoslavia accelerated their demands to unite the region with Hungary in the 1990s when the Serbian leader Slobodan Milošević increased the level of aggression towards them; in return, the Hungarian government declared that it would defend the rights of the Hungarian population in Vojvodina.[10] However, in 1999 when the Hungarian government declared its non-interventionist stance regarding the Hungarian minority issue in Yugoslavia, the Hungarians in Vojvodina refrained from radicalising against the central authority.[11] When considering this case in relation to the Ottoman Armenians, it can be argued that when there was external support from foreign states, the secessionist movement among the Ottoman Armenian community crested; conversely, when the external support dissipated following military defeats on the battlefield by the Turkish National Movement, members of the Armenian community recalibrated their political position and acquiesced to the Turkish National Movement, repressive as it was. As the theory puts forward, ethnic minority groups pursue separatist, pro-independence strategies when there is repression from the host state and external support from third-party states; yet, when the external support disappears, the minority groups, left in a 'state of vulnerability', accommodate the majority, even under oppression.[12] What is absent in this theory is that it does not sufficiently take into consideration the possibility of genocide and collective violence, which can significantly influence and shift the attitudes of non-dominant, 'minority' groups, as in the case of the Ottoman Armenians. The genocide affected the demographic composition of the

[10] Jenne, 'A Bargaining Theory of Minority Demands', 740–1. [11] Ibid., 743.
[12] Jenne, *Ethnic Bargaining*.

community and reduced the numbers of the political elite and intellectuals, resulting in the loss of any power to leverage. Yet, the political shifts are still visible within the community from 1918 to 1923, when the political leaders of the Allied Powers signalled strong support for the Armenian cause.

In addition to ethnic bargaining, I would add that the atmosphere of insecurity played a pivotal role in the alteration of the Armenian political stance, as its rapid transformation can be conceptualised within the framework of what has been referred to as the security dilemma. Rogers Brubaker argues that a national minority is not merely based on ethnic demography but also a dynamic political position, which is constituted by numerous viewpoints that emerge within the group. In the case of Ottoman Armenians during the Armistice years, I argue that the majority of the community was unified for common political goals, as will be demonstrated throughout this book.[13]

Barry Posen describes how the presence of a power vacuum during the collapse of an imperial power may create fear among different minority ethnic groups. In cases of disintegration of the state and lack of security, minority ethnic groups might perceive the neighbouring groups as a threat.[14] Stephen M. Saidemen similarly argues that even if it is not a collapsing state, minority ethnic groups might suffer security threats because of the state's inability to ensure their protection.[15] If there is such a security dilemma within the state, minority ethnic groups either seek secession to create a new state over which they have complete control or they seek to join a state where their ethnic group is more secure.

[13] For Brubaker's framework, see Rogers Brubaker, 'National Minorities, Nationalizing States, and External National Homelands in the New Europe', *Daedalus* 124(2) (1995), 107–32.

[14] Barry R. Posen, 'The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict', *Survival* 35(1) (1993), 27–47; David Carment, Patrick James, and Zeynep Taydas, 'The Internationalization of Ethnic Conflict: State, Society, and Synthesis', *International Studies Review* 11(1) (2009), 63–86; D. A. Lake and D. Rothchild, 'Containing Fear: The Origins and Management of Ethnic Conflict', *International Security* 21(2) (1996), 43–4.

[15] Stephen M. Saideman, 'Is Pandora's Box Half-Empty or Half-Full?', in *Ethnic Conflict: Fear, Diffusion, Escalation*, D. Rothchild and D. A. Lake, eds. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998), 135. As cited in Yasemin Akbaba, Patrick James, and Zeynep Taydas, 'The "Chicken or the Egg"? External Support and Rebellion in Ethnopolitics', in *Intra-State Conflict, Governments and Security*, Stephen M. Saideman and Marie-Joëlle Zahar, eds. (Abingdon: Routledge, 2008).

Furthermore, during this process, ethnic groups seek external assistance to bring international attention to their situation and demands.[16] Even though there is a burgeoning literature on the conceptualisation of the security dilemma by scholars of political science and sociology, each particular case possesses unique characteristics.[17] What can be drawn from the security dilemma theory in the case of Ottoman Armenians during the Armistice years is that there was mutual distrust and fear in the Ottoman Muslim and Armenian communities of the Ottoman Empire, and this mutual fear, a key component of the security dilemma, then generated a climate of insecurity. To consider the conditions of Ottoman Armenians within the framework of the security dilemma, I argue that there was a power vacuum – most notably following the Ottoman Empire's defeat in World War I to the Allied Powers – and the state was not in a position to provide security for Ottoman Armenians. During the war, the ruling Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) government orchestrated the Armenian genocide, which resulted in the annihilation of the majority of Armenians. The Turkish Muslim population feared that Ottoman Armenians would divide their country by establishing alliances with the Allied Powers in seeking retribution. Ottoman Armenians, on the other hand, feared that they could be yet again the subject of Turkish Muslim aggression. Therefore, the remaining Ottoman Armenians could not place faith in the newly established Turkish government to provide security and protection for them in Anatolia. Given this atmosphere of insecurity, the majority of Ottoman Armenians, validating the Ottoman Muslims' fears, entered into friendship with the Allied Powers to establish their own state during the first four years of the Armistice period (1918–22). However, following the defeat of the Greek, French, and Armenian forces against the Turkish Nationalist forces in western, southern, and eastern Anatolia respectively, Ottoman Armenians – now unable to pursue separatist aims in the newly established Republic of Turkey – reoriented their political position and pursued the path of reconciliation with the

[16] Akbaba, James, and Taydas, 'The "Chicken or the Egg"?', 163–4.

[17] The following are selections from the literature on the concept of the security dilemma: Posen, 'The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict'; Alan Collins, 'The Ethnic Security Dilemma: Evidence from Malaysia', *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 20(3) (1998), 261–78; Shiping Tang, 'The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict: Toward a Dynamic and Integrative Theory of Ethnic Conflict', *Review of International Studies* 37(2) (2011), 511–36.

Ottoman Muslims. The security concerns at the time forced Ottoman Armenians to declare their loyalty to the Turkish National Movement in order to protect the physical and cultural existence of the community. Thus, I contend that Ottoman Armenians changed their political position as the Armistice period drew to a close in order to protect their existence in the atmosphere of insecurity.

The purpose of the analysis throughout this book, however, is not to demonstrate the strengths, weaknesses, or applicability of these theories to the case of the Ottoman Armenians during the Armistice period. Instead, this book is a historical analysis of the Ottoman Armenian community amid the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire. These two theories inspired my understanding as I approach the historical material to better contextualise the subject matter at hand; without falling into the trap of anachronism, I believe they are useful in conceiving the political reactions of a non-Muslim community while the Empire collapsed.

Throughout the book, while analysing the political position of the Ottoman Armenian community, I focus on the statements of the community's mainstream policymakers, such as political party leaders, the press, elected members of the Armenian National Assembly, prominent opinion leaders, and the Armenian Patriarchate. While I acknowledge that all Armenians living in the Ottoman Empire did not embrace the same political approach and that it is not possible to gauge the opinions of all community members based on archival sources, I argue that one is able to comprehend mainstream/widely accepted political stances within the community through an analysis of Armenian papers. Therefore, rather than claiming that all Armenians maintained the same political stance at a given time, I utilise 'the majority of Armenians' to reflect the mainstream tendencies.

Sources of Knowledge

The primary sources utilised in preparing this work are the Armenian and Ottoman Turkish press published during the years of the Armistice. The research relies on a collection of twenty-two Armenian and Ottoman Turkish papers (listed in Tables I.1 and I.2), which are unquestionably invaluable sources for mapping the inner dynamics of the Armenian and Turkish communities in a period of transition.

At the onset of World War I in 1914, more than thirty Armenian newspapers, journals, and periodicals were being published in Istanbul.

Table I.1 ***Ottoman Armenian press***

Name	Place of publication	Year of publication	Political position
Zhamanag	Istanbul	1908–	Neutral/non-partisan
Jagadamard	Istanbul	1909–24	Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF)
Verchin Lur	Istanbul	1914–30	Neutral/pro-Ramgavar
Giligia	Adana	1919–21	Pro-ARF
Arewelyan Mamul	Izmir	1871–1909, 1919–22	Pro-Ramgavar
Tashink	Izmir	1909–19	Pro-Ramgavar
Koyamard	Izmir	1920	Pro-ARF
Horizon	Izmir	1919–22	Neutral/pro-ARF
Piwzantion	Istanbul	1896–18	Neutral
Arawod	Istanbul	1909–24	Ramgavar Liberal Party
Hay Tzayn	Aleppo and Adana	1918–20	Pro-Ramgavar
Hay Tsaw	Adana	1919–21	Pro-Ramgavar
Yerewan	Istanbul	1918–19	Neutral/Conservative
Nor Gyank	Istanbul	1918–19	Neutral
Zhoghovurt/ Zhoghovurti Tsaynĕ	Istanbul	1918–23	Neutral
Yergir	Istanbul	1919–22	Social Democrat Hnchagyan Party (Hnchag Party)

After the Empire's entry into the war, the CUP government embarked upon a campaign of censorship, prohibiting much of the Armenian press and closing twenty-five papers and journals. Only *Piwzantion* (Byzantium), *Zhamanag* (The Times), and *Verchin Lur* (The Latest News) remained, for these Armenian papers were not affiliated with any Armenian political organisations, making them essentially 'neutral' in the eyes of the state.[18] Besides newspapers in Istanbul,

[18] A. A. Kharatyan, Արեվմտահայ Մամուլն Իր Պատմության Ավարտին *(1900–1922)* (Arevmdahay Mamuln Ir Patmutyan Avardin (1900–1922)) [The Western Armenian Press at the End of Its History] (Yerevan: Patmutyan Institut, 2015), 12–13.

Table I.2 ***Ottoman Turkish press***

Name	Place of publication	Year of publication	Political position
İleri	Istanbul	1919–24	Pro-Turkish National Movement
Vakit	Istanbul	1917–49	Pro-Turkish National Movement
Istanbul	Istanbul	1919–20	Anti-Turkish National Movement/ pro-Loyalist
Alemdar	Istanbul	1909–22	Anti-Turkish National Movement/ pro-Loyalist
Yeni Gün	Istanbul and Ankara	1918–24	pro-Turkish National Movement
Peyam/Peyam-ı Sabah	Istanbul	1913–22	Anti-Turkish National Movement/pro-Loyalist

authorities shuttered more than eighteen Armenian publications from various cities in Anatolia including Van, Harput (Kharpert), Sivas, Tokat, Erzurum, and Trabzon.[19] The majority of Ottoman Turkish papers shared the same fate, with only a small number of media outlets allowed to remain as organs of propaganda.[20] From 1915 to the signing of the Armistice of Mudros in October 1918, the Armenian and Ottoman Turkish press were completely silent vis-à-vis political developments. With the signing of the Armistice, however, the political and cultural life of Ottoman Armenians started to re-emerge in Istanbul and Izmir. In 1918, eight journals (some newly established, others previously established papers resuming operation) were published in Istanbul. The following year, more than twenty literary journals, newspapers, and satirical magazines were published in Istanbul and Izmir.[21] News items, reports, editorials, and political discussions in these revitalised Armenian as well as Turkish papers, published by a spectrum of political and cultural institutions, provide deep insight into the socio-political developments of the period and call for a comprehensive

[19] Ibid., 14.
[20] Erol A. F. Baykal, *The Ottoman Press (1908–1923)* (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 122.
[21] Kharatyan, Արեվմտահայ Մամուլն Իր Պատմության Ավարտին [The Western Armenian Press at the End of Its History], 359.

analysis. Detailed information about the press sources is provided in the Appendix.

Organisation of the Book

Chapter 1 presents the aspirations of Ottoman Armenians towards the establishment of a *Miatsyal Hayastan* ('United Armenia'). The Armistice of Mudros ended what had been considered by Ottoman Armenians to be a perpetual state of insecurity, finally granting them liberty. They started to campaign and lobby for the establishment of an Armenian state in the Vilayât-ı Sitte (six provinces). These provinces, covering contemporary eastern Anatolia, were Sivas, Diyarbekir, Bitlis, Erzurum, Van, and Mamuretülaziz. It was crucial that Ottoman Armenians prove that they constituted a majority of the population in those regions or that there were enough Armenian survivors to relocate into the region to produce a majority. Campaigning around the Wilsonian principles was a major political goal during this period.

Chapter 2 analyses the implications for Ottoman Armenians of the emergence of the Turkish National Movement. It is significant that before the defeat of the Armenian military by the Turkish Nationalists in 1920 and the French retreat from the Cilicia region in 1921, influenced by the Ottoman Armenian press, the Ottoman Armenian public considered the Nationalist forces as 'bands' who were another incarnation of the CUP. As the Nationalist forces worked to unite the Muslims of the Empire to fight against the occupation in Anatolia, Ottoman Armenians lived in fear of a coming second genocide, as they were the obvious and assumed targets of the increasing hatred of Anatolian Muslims towards the native Christians of Anatolia. This chapter deconstructs the political position of Ottoman Armenians before the French, Greek, and Armenian defeats to Nationalist forces and presents the various dimensions of the ethnic conflict, fear, and insecurity gripping Anatolia.

Chapter 3 elaborates on the sustained support of Ottoman Armenians for the establishment of a United Armenia. Firstly, during the Franco-Turkish War (1919–21), Ottoman Armenians served as legions within the French occupation forces. Nevertheless, when the French government secured its economic interests from the Nationalist Turks and

withdrew from the Cilicia region, the remaining Armenian population found itself under threat of massacre and was thus forced to flee to the deserts of northern Syria. Furthermore, the chapter addresses the ramifications of the Turkish–Armenian War (1920) in the Caucasus and the aid campaign of Ottoman Armenians in support of the Armenian government. The political position of Ottoman Armenians is explicated through two case studies in this chapter: the French–Armenian friendship and the support of Ottoman Armenians for the Armenian state.

Chapter 4 explores the transformation of the Armenian political position from a pro-Allied position to a pro-Kemalist one. From 1918 to 1922, the Armenian community of the Ottoman Empire supported the Allied Powers in the hope that an independent Armenian state would be established in the Vilayât-ı Sitte. This expectation was shared by all Armenian political parties and was reflected as a common goal in Armenian papers of all political leanings. Nevertheless, as the Nationalists accumulated victories on the battlefield, the Armenian community in Anatolia, as well as in Istanbul in particular, began to adapt themselves to the newly established Nationalist rule, under which minorities were not considered to be truly 'Turkish'. This significant turning point in the Armenian public sphere demonstrates the developing opinions of the Armenian community during the Republican years. I illustrate how Ottoman Armenians came to support the Turkish National Movement after realising they were left with no alternative following the defeat of the Armenian government in the Caucasus and the Greek and French forces in Anatolia.

The Conclusion widens in scope from the case of the Armenians, revisiting the collapse of the empires and the reactions of minority groups in comparison with the Armenians in order to situate the main argument of the book within this broader context.

An Interlude: Armenians and the Ottoman Empire in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries

The arrival of the Ottomans' fate was neither sudden nor unexpected. It was the eventual outcome of periods of reform, wars, and revolutions. The nineteenth century brought significant political and social developments in Ottoman society. Under Sultan Selim III (r. 1789–1807), a reform process was initiated, which would continue throughout the nineteenth century. Sultan Selim's primary concern was to modernise

the Ottoman military in order to compete with the Russian and Habsburg empires, two long-standing rivals who defeated the Ottomans in multiple wars at the end of the eighteenth century. To effectively reform the military, reforms in taxation and bureaucracy were required as well. Sultan Selim III also saw the importance of building diplomatic relations with European states, understanding the danger of isolation, which he feared could lead to the Empire's collapse. To improve communication with the European powers, he appointed permanent diplomatic missions to major European cities such as London, Paris, Vienna, and Berlin.[22]

The final decades of the eighteenth century witnessed the gradual penetration by European technology of the Ottoman domestic economy through local branches of European manufacturers, as well as urban non-Muslim entrepreneurs, who had greater fluency in European languages. An increase in newspaper circulation, the construction of telephone lines and street lighting, and the advancement in municipal services significantly improved the daily lives of Ottomans during the nineteenth century.[23] Outside of the capital, throughout the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth century, power in the Ottoman provinces was concentrated in the hands of *ayan* families (those of great wealth and reputation), powerful tribal leaders, tax farmers, and janissaries, who acted as the official representatives of the state in the provinces.[24] The effective collection of taxes necessary to fund the military's modernisation remained a challenge for Ottoman sultans. Sultan Selim III identified these chronic problems, but he was deposed, imprisoned, and subsequently assassinated by the janissaries. Nonetheless, his successor Mahmud II (r. 1808–39) continued with reforms.

He, like Selim III, believed that the Empire should foster its diplomatic relations with European states and established a Translation Office as part of this effort. Initially, the staff working at the Translation Office mainly consisted of Romioi. However, after the Greek independence

[22] Fatma Müge Göçek, *Denial of Violence: Ottoman Past, Turkish Present, and Collective Violence against the Armenians, 1789–2009* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 84; Erik Jan Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, 4th ed. (London: I.B. Tauris, 2017), 17.

[23] Göçek, *Denial of Violence*, 93.

[24] Ryan Gingeras, *Fall of the Sultanate: The Great War and the End of the Ottoman Empire, 1908–1922* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 15; Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, 10.

movement in the 1820s, those still living within the Empire were seen as untrustworthy, and Muslims and Armenians especially, whose schools emphasised French language instruction, were increasingly recruited. Many Ottoman bureaucrats and diplomats received their higher education while working at the Translation Office and eventually a new class of educated Ottoman bureaucrats emerged.[25]

The reforms conducted during the rule of Mahmud II widely affected Ottoman society. The abolition of the janissaries was a major step in accelerating the military's modernisation, as they had been considered an 'obstacle' that steadfastly opposed the introduction of new weapons and technology.[26] Following the abolition of the janissaries, Mahmud II directed the opening of European-style educational institutions in the capital, including the Imperial Medical School (1827), the Imperial Music School (1831), and the School of Military Sciences (1834).[27] The Sultan and his advisers came to recognise the importance of education in competing with the European states.[28] Even though Mahmud II enthusiastically continued the reform process, the reforms were implemented primarily in the capital. For instance, until the 1840s, there was no postal network throughout the wider Ottoman Empire. Without the distribution of newspapers in the provinces, *menzilhane*s (post stations), located in towns where horseback messengers would rest, were relied upon to disseminate news between the capital and periphery.[29]

Following the death of Mahmud II in 1839, his son Sultan Abdülmecid I (r. 1839–61) announced the Tanzimat Fermanı (The Imperial Edict of Reorganisation), also known as Tanzimat-ı Hayriye (Auspicious Reorganisation), heralding a new period of reforms in public and political life in which he assured the life, property, and honour of all Ottoman subjects, fair taxation, and reforms in military recruitment.[30] Indeed, the Tanzimat Fermanı was a strategic effort to

[25] Göçek, *Denial of Violence*, 86; Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, 38.
[26] Gingeras, *Fall of the Sultanate*, 14.
[27] Murat R. Şıvıloğlu, *The Emergence of Public Opinion: State and Society in the Late Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 137; Carter V. Findley, *Bureaucratic Reform in the Ottoman Empire* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980), 158–63.
[28] Şıvıloğlu, *The Emergence of Public Opinion*, 138.
[29] Baykal, *The Ottoman Press*, 18.
[30] Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, 45. Hagop Barsoumian, 'The Eastern Question and the Tanzimat Era', in *The Armenian People from Ancient to*

win the European powers' support against a major rival, Mehmed Ali Paşa, the governor and later ruler of Egypt.[31] The Tanzimat reforms announced during the nineteenth century were attempts to both decrease the level of the European powers' meddling in Ottoman domestic affairs on behalf of the non-Muslim populations and to modernise the idea of Ottoman citizenship based on the equality of all subjects.[32] The importance of creating an 'Ottoman nation' was highlighted in the reports written for the sultan by the educated Ottoman bureaucrats of the Tanzimat period (1839–76), who imagined an Ottoman umbrella identity which embraced all subjects living in the Ottoman Empire, regardless of their religious or ethnic backgrounds.[33]

While the Tanzimat reforms aimed to create a shared, equal Ottoman identity, the Ottoman millet system undermined this attempt, as it was rooted in the notion of Muslim supremacy and the subordinate semi-autonomy of non-Muslim communities. Non-Muslims were obliged to pay a poll tax and obey social rules such as building houses of worship in designated areas only. In return for accepting this subordinate status, non-Muslims were granted limited autonomy in their religious and civil affairs under the millet system.[34] Prohibited from bearing arms or working in government administration, legal affairs, or the military, the non-Muslims mastered skills in trade and commerce. The Muslim population, in turn, was primarily employed in government administration, legal and religious affairs, and the military. As the Industrial Revolution in western Europe accelerated the development of trade and commerce through the improvement of international trade routes, non-Muslims, clustered in port cities in the Ottoman Empire, amassed great wealth.[35] Though this non-Muslim

Modern Times, Volume II: Foreign Dominion to Statehood: The Fifteenth Century to the Twentieth Century (London: Macmillan Press, 1997), 180; Aram Arkun, 'Into the Modern Age, 1800–1913', in *The Armenians Past and Present in the Making of National Identity*, Marina Kurkchiyan and Edmund Herzig, eds. (Oxford: Routledge Curzon, 2005), 71.

31 Göçek, *Denial of Violence*, 86.

32 Karen Barkey and George Gavrilis, 'The Ottoman Millet System: Non-Territorial Autonomy and Its Contemporary Legacy', *Ethnopolitics* 15(1) (2016), 135.

33 Şıvıloğlu, *The Emergence of Public Opinion*, 135.

34 Ussama Makdisi, *Age of Coexistence: The Ecumenical Frame and the Making of the Modern Arab World* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2019), 19.

35 Göçek, *Denial of Violence*, 73.

merchant class profited through trade and commerce with the European merchants, the promised legal reforms for equality in social life were never completely realised. Furthermore, Muslims became resentful of the non-Muslim merchant families' wealth, significantly impacting intercommunal relations in the Ottoman state. State officials monitored non-Muslims' economic activity and ensured that their new-found economic power would not be transformed into political power. The example of the Armenians in Sivas illustrates the increasing entrance of non-Muslims into the fields of trade, science, and manufacturing. In 1877, the Armenian silversmiths working in the city had developed the capacity to produce ammunition and arms, including a European revolver. Additionally, the great majority of physicians, dentists, and pharmacists in the region were of Armenian origin.[36]

While the reforms appeared beneficial for the Ottoman Armenians and other religious communities, not only Muslims but also non-Muslims had reservations. The religious leadership of the non-Muslim confessional groups was reluctant to support the reforms proclaimed by the Ottoman state; if the reforms were to deliver on their promise of equality in law, the existing hierarchy within these communities – the church's authority – might be destabilised. The Ottoman *ulema* (Muslim religious scholars), on the other hand, protested on the basis that such reforms would be detrimental to Muslims' superior position in society.

Sultan Abdülmecid further issued the Islahat Fermanı (Reform Edict) of 1856, in which the Ottoman state, in a manner similar to the Tanzimat Fermanı, assured the equality of all subjects in the eyes of the state, regardless of their religion, language, or ethnic background. This equality entailed the equal taxation of both Muslims and non-Muslims and access to public employment for all subjects. Even though the edict proclaimed non-Muslims were required to serve in the military, many non-Muslims chose to pay a new tax, the Bedel-i Nakdi, in order to avoid conscription.

The nineteenth century also witnessed reforms in the education system. In 1869, the Maarif-i Umumiye Nizamnamesi (Regulation of Public Instruction) ordered the opening of four-year state schools in every town and district throughout the Empire, where boys and girls aged between six and eleven years were to follow a standardised curriculum.[37] The state established the first European-style schools in the capital. In addition to secular schools focused on particular subjects such as medicine and

[36] Ibid., 96. [37] Şıvıloğlu, *The Emergence of Public Opinion*, 174.

administration, military academies were established in the Balkans and Anatolia to train cadets for war. Tribal schools were opened in the provinces to educate the sons of Arab, Druze, and Kurdish notables. Even though the enrolment of Muslim students increased with the introduction of these state schools, the number of schools opened by non-Muslims greatly exceeded that of schools established by the state. Thus, non-Muslim students had access to schools more readily than Muslims.[38] This point further increased anger among traditional Muslims towards their non-Muslim neighbours, who, from their perspective, already had better opportunities in trade, commerce, science, and technology.

The nineteenth century witnessed riots and massacres against the Ottoman Empire's non-Muslim populations. The major reforms introduced by the sultans did little to de-escalate the persisting tensions between Muslims and non-Muslims. For instance, following the emergence of the Greek rebellion in the 1820s in the Peloponnese, which resulted in Greek independence, the religious ulema attacked and murdered Romioi in Istanbul's streets. The Greek Orthodox Patriarch was hanged on Easter Sunday, with his body left on display for three days to 'give a lesson' to the Romioi.[39] Additional examples include the Damascus massacre of 1860, which was an anti-Christian riot, and the inter-communal war in Mount Lebanon, in which thousands of Christians were attacked by Muslim mobs. During the Damascus massacre, European sources estimated that around 3,000 Christians were murdered and eleven churches plundered.[40]

What is clear from these instances is that when non-Muslim communities increased their calls for autonomy, violence ensued. The introduction of reforms was not primarily for the good of the people but was intended to preserve the existence of the state itself; bearing the pressure of a weak military and economy, the Ottoman sultans introduced the reforms to prevent the dynasty's collapse.[41]

Ottoman Armenians during the Nineteenth Century

The influence of the Armenian *amira* (commercial elite) was significant within the Armenian community during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The amiras, who in total numbered less than 200, held

[38] Göçek, *Denial of Violence*, 104. [39] Makdisi, *Age of Coexistence*, 49.
[40] Ibid., 54. [41] Göçek, *Denial of Violence*, 101.

influence over the Armenian community leadership. This political power was a direct result of their economic wealth and connections within the Ottoman administrative ranks.[42] The cyclical change of the patriarchs, the issue of the recognition of the Armenian Catholic and Protestant communities as separate millets, and the influence of amiras in daily and political life detrimentally affected the Ottoman Armenian community's development during this period. Even so, the Armenian community's conditions in Istanbul were far better than those of the Armenians living in Anatolia. Outside of the capital, Armenian peasants living in the eastern provinces suffered greatly from taxes imposed upon them by the central Ottoman government. In addition to the poll tax imposed upon members of non-Muslim communities, Armenians paid *emlak* (property tax), *aghnam* (animal tax), and *öşür* (tithe) taxes. Furthermore, there were unofficial taxes, *haraç* (tributes), paid to the Kurdish and Turkish *agha*s (chiefs).[43]

While the sultans and the bureaucratic elite surrounding them planned and implemented such reforms in the nineteenth century, the Ottoman Armenian community, particularly in the capital, was flourishing in terms of economic wealth, culture, and education. Against the backdrop of the Armenian press and the establishment of Armenian schools and colleges, a cultural revival was taking place. Armenian students, funded by wealthy families from the Armenian community, were sent to France for higher education. By mid-century, following the return of the first classes of Armenian students from France, a new cohort of Armenian intelligentsia emerged in Istanbul, ready to take charge of community affairs.[44]

In the second half of the nineteenth century, the situation for Armenians seemed to improve with the Tanzimat and Islahat reforms, as well as the announcement of the Armenian Constitution in 1863

[42] Hagop Barsoumian, *The Armenian Amira Class of Istanbul* (Yerevan: American University of Armenia, 2007), 92–139; Barsoumian, 'The Eastern Question and the Tanzimat Era', 189; Razmik Panossian, *The Armenians from Kings and Priests to Merchants and Commissars* (London: Hurst & Co., 2006), 85; Bedross Der Matossian, *Shattered Dreams of Revolution: From Liberty to Violence in the Late Ottoman Empire* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2014), 10.

[43] Barsoumian, 'The Eastern Question and the Tanzimat Era', 193.

[44] Vahe Oshagan, 'Modern Armenian Literature and the Intellectual History', in *The Armenian People from Ancient to Modern Times*, Hovannisian, ed., 151; Der Matossian, *Shattered Dreams of Revolution*, 10.

after the approval of Sultan Abdulaziz.[45] This new Constitution acted as more of a community guideline for internal affairs than a national charter, bearing limited political value in Ottoman society. The Armenian National Assembly's establishment empowered community members to elect civil representatives, decreasing the authority of the Patriarchate and amiras. However, the majority of Armenians living in the provinces outside the capital were not consulted by the Armenian leadership in Istanbul as the Constitution was written.[46] Following the 1858 land reforms, Kurdish tribal leaders in particular assumed ownership of lands which had been cultivated by Armenian villagers.[47] The Armenian population in the eastern provinces, under pressure from local authorities including Kurdish and Circassian leaders, developed an affinity for neighbouring Russia. Thanks to the publication of newspapers and their increased distribution by the mid-nineteenth century, Armenians living in the region were aware of the vastly superior conditions of their compatriots living in the Caucasus under the Tsarist regime. While the Ottoman government invested in infrastructure projects in the western provinces of Anatolia, the socio-economic conditions in the eastern provinces, where the majority of Ottoman Armenians lived, remained poor.[48]

End of Reform Euphoria

The Ottoman state bankruptcy and the subsequent establishment of the European-controlled Düyun-ı Umumiye (Public Debt Administration) in 1875, the British occupation of Egypt in 1882, and secessionist

[45] Vartan Artinian, 'A Study of the Historical Development of the Armenian Constitutional System in the Ottoman Empire, 1839–1863' (PhD dissertation, Massachusetts, Brandeis University, 1969), 74–107; Arkun, 'Into the Modern Age', 75; Panossian, *The Armenians from Kings and Priests*, 150.

[46] Barsoumian, 'The Eastern Question and the Tanzimat Era', 198; Panossian, *The Armenians from Kings and Priests*, 153; Benny Morris and Dror Ze'evi, *The Thirty-Year Genocide: Turkey's Destruction of Its Christian Minorities 1894–1924* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2019), 33.

[47] Gingeras, *Fall of the Sultanate*, 146.

[48] For instance, Mehmet Emin Bey, who was the governor of the Erzurum province in 1912, explains the poor conditions in Erzurum in one of his reports. See Fulya Özkan, 'The Role of the Trabzon-Erzurum-Bayezid Road in Regional Politics and Ottoman Diplomacy, 1850s–1910s', in *The Ottoman East in the Nineteenth Century: Societies, Identities and Politics*, Yaşar Tolga Cora, Dzovinar Derderian, and Ali Sipahi, eds. (London: I.B. Tauris, 2016), 26.

nationalist movements' rise in the Balkans and their subsequent wars for independence, together with the resultant flow of Muslim refugees from the Caucasus and the Balkans to Anatolia, cast doubt upon the Tanzimat promise of equality for all subjects.[49] Abdulhamid II ascended to the throne in August 1876, following Abdulaziz's reign and the brief ninety-three-day rule of Murad V. Though he worked with the reformists on the proclamation of the Ottoman Constitution, the outbreak of the Russo-Ottoman War two years later significantly altered Abdulhamid's policies. He suspended the Constitution and prorogued the Ottoman Parliament due to the post-war political turmoil.

Armenians' precarious relations with the Ottoman state and the injustices that it had inflicted upon them became a topic of concern in European political circles in the second half of the nineteenth century, particularly at the peak of military conflict between the Russian and Ottoman empires. The Russian Empire turned its attention to the Balkan region, supporting the Slavic populations in an attempt to weaken the Ottoman Empire, while the British were chiefly concerned with the Russian advance further south, which could adversely affect their influence over India. The conflict escalated during the war over Crimea in 1853. Here, the Russians attempted to take control of the region but suffered a defeat to the Ottomans, who had garnered British and French support. However, twenty-five years later, the Russian Empire won a decisive victory against the Ottomans, reaching the gates of Istanbul during the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877–8. While Ottoman Armenians remained loyal to the Ottoman Empire, Armenians in the Caucasus volunteered to take up arms with the Russian army.[50] The Treaty of San Stefano, which was signed at the gates of Istanbul by Ottoman and Russian representatives, stipulated harsh terms for the Ottomans, such as independence for Romania, Serbia, and Montenegro, autonomy for Bulgaria and Bosnia, and the concession of Kars, Batum, Oltu, Bayazid, and Artvin to the Russian Empire. The Armenian Patriarchate attempted to win the Russian Empire's support to ensure the Ottoman Armenians would receive similar rights to those granted to the Balkan Christians.[51]

[49] Makdisi, *Age of Coexistence*, 77; Donald Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide: Imperialism, Nationalism, and the Destruction of the Ottoman Armenians* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 36.
[50] Arkun, 'Into the Modern Age', 78.
[51] Morris and Ze'evi, *The Thirty-Year Genocide*, 17–18.

Article 16 of the Treaty of San Stefano guaranteed the implementation of reforms in the provinces and the security of the Armenian population, but the Armenians were permitted neither the independence nor the autonomy that the Balkan Christians had. Concerned by the Russian Empire's increasing influence in the region, the British came to an understanding with the German Empire to soften the terms in favour of the Ottomans. At the Berlin Congress in 1878, the European powers decided to redraw the Ottoman–Russian border, which obligated the Ottoman state to introduce reforms that would improve the living conditions of Armenians in the eastern provinces.[52] The Armenian delegation, led by former Patriarch Khrimian Hayrik (Father), was disappointed with the outcome of the treaty negotiations, as it had sought to guarantee an autonomous regional government for the Armenians, similar to the case of Lebanon.[53] Unsatisfied with the outcome of post-war settlement talks in Berlin, Khrimian returned to Istanbul and stated in a sermon that the Balkan Christians tasted 'harissa stew' with their 'iron spoons', whereas the Armenians had only 'paper spoons' which dissolved when they were dipped into the same harissa. With this metaphor, he highlighted how having 'iron spoons' would permit the Armenians to achieve their political goals, as had the Balkan Christians.[54] This metaphor was later regarded by the Armenian revolutionaries as a call to increase activities for self-defence and self-reliance, which would allow the Armenian community to finally have its own 'iron spoons'.[55]

With the Treaty of Berlin, signed in July 1878, the Ottoman Empire capitulated to an autonomous Bulgarian state in the Balkans and the occupation of Kars, Cyprus, and Bosnia by the Russian, British, and

[52] Ronald Grigor Suny, 'Eastern Armenians under Tsarist Rule', in *The Armenian People from Ancient to Modern Times, Volume II: Foreign Dominion to Statehood: The Fifteenth Century to the Twentieth Century*, Richard Hovannisian, ed. (London: Macmillan Press, 1997), 127.

[53] Ronald Grigor Suny, *'They Can Live in the Desert but Nowhere Else': A History of the Armenian Genocide* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015), 95–96.

[54] Richard Hovannisian, 'The Armenian Question in the Ottoman Empire 1876 to 1914', in *The Armenian People from Ancient to Modern Times, Volume II: Foreign Dominion to Statehood: The Fifteenth Century to the Twentieth Century*, Richard Hovannisian, ed. (London: Macmillan Press, 1997), 211.

[55] Ibid., 211.

Austria-Hungarian empires, respectively. Moreover, the treaty stipulated that the Ottoman state must advance reforms for its Christian populations, in particular for Armenians.[56] After defeat by the Russians, thousands of Muslim refugees in the Caucasus – Tatars, Abkhazians, Circassians, Nogay, Dagestanis, Chechens, and the greater part of the Balkan Muslims – were forced to migrate to Anatolia, creating contention around matters of land, employment, and crime.[57]

Abdulhamid II soon solidified his network of spies and *jurnalci* (informers), who would inform the capital regarding the activities of the pro-Constitution opposition from across the Empire. The Ottoman press functioned under strict censorship, and the regime restricted public gatherings and social events. Authorities even limited the distribution of guns and ammunition to all soldiers, out of fear of a potential coup against what had become an absolutist regime.[58]

From the last quarter of the nineteenth century until 1915, around 80,000 young Armenian men left their villages in the Armenian provinces, especially that of Mamuretülaziz, for North America.[59] This emigration was motivated primarily by the ever-increasing taxation demands from powerful local Kurdish tribes. Following the Tanzimat reforms, state-issued title deeds were widely distributed to Kurdish families in order to increase the state's revenue via higher taxation. To generate additional income, these land-owning families exacted larger amounts from the local peasants than were owed to the Ottoman state.[60] Large territories in Van, Bitlis, and Diyarbekir provinces remained under the control of local Kurdish tribal emirs. In order to maintain the balance of power with the Kurdish emirs in these provinces, Sultan Abdulhamid II organised his Hamidiye Alayları (special brigades of Kurdish forces) as a means to suppress an emerging

[56] Gingeras, *Fall of the Sultanate*, 19; Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, 70; Morris and Ze'evi, *The Thirty-Year Genocide*, 17–18.
[57] Gingeras, *Fall of the Sultanate*, 20; Der Matossian, *Shattered Dreams of Revolution*, 12.
[58] Gingeras, *Fall of the Sultanate*, 22; Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, 75; Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide*, 47.
[59] David Gutman, 'The Political Economy of Armenian Migration from the Harput Region to North America in the Hamidian Era, 1885–1908', in *The Ottoman East in the Nineteenth Century: Societies, Identities and Politics*, Yaşar Tolga Cora, Dzovinar Derderian, and Ali Sipahi, eds. (London: I.B. Tauris, 2016), 44.
[60] Ibid., 48; Der Matossian, *Shattered Dreams of Revolution*, 12.

Armenian revolutionary movement and exert pressure on the Armenian population.[61]

The migration of provincial Armenians to the United States increased suspicion from the Ottoman authorities, who viewed it as a plot by the Armenian revolutionaries to disseminate Western socio-political ideas among Armenian peasants upon their return. Motivated by these conspiracy theories, authorities soon prohibited the issuance of passports for Armenians seeking to migrate to North America and Europe.[62] Authorities identified both the Armenians who emigrated to the United States and those who wished to return to the Ottoman Empire from abroad as potential threats to the state, and they were thus banned from entering the Empire.[63] Beyond political motives, the Ottoman authorities worked to stem the migration flow in order to assure the domestic labour supply for port cities such as Mersin in Adana province and Izmir in Aydın province. The majority of Armenians who sought to migrate were potential cheap labourers; therefore, they were needed to sustain the growing economy for these coastal cities.[64]

In response to the escalation of pressure from the Kurdish emirates, the provincial Armenian intellectuals and the Armenian church encouraged the Armenians living in these provinces to formally petition the Ottoman state to turn its attention to their desperate situation. Provincial Armenians drafted and sent petitions to the Sublime Porte requesting assistance in addressing the chronic injustices inflicted by the powerful Kurdish notables.[65] The local Armenians were burdened by double taxation, to both the Ottoman state and the local Kurdish tribes who 'protected' them. Instead of paying taxes to the state, some Armenians chose to pay only the local tribes, as it was they who most immediately ensured their safety.[66]

[61] Janet Klein, *The Margins of Empire: Kurdish Militias in the Ottoman Tribal Zone* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011), 52–94; Gutman, 'The Political Economy of Armenian Migration', 49; Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, 79; Morris and Ze'evi, *The Thirty-Year Genocide*, 42–3.

[62] Gutman, 'The Political Economy of Armenian Migration', 52.

[63] Ibid., 52.

[64] Ibid., 53.

[65] Dzovinar Derderian, 'Shaping Subjectivities and Contesting Power Through the Image of Kurds, 1860s', in *The Ottoman East in the Nineteenth Century: Societies, Identities and Politics*, Yaşar Tolga Cora, Dzovinar Derderian, and Ali Sipahi, eds. (London: I.B. Tauris, 2016), 86.

[66] Mehmet Polatel, 'The Complete Ruin of a District: The Sasun Massacre of 1894', in *The Ottoman East in the Nineteenth Century: Societies, Identities and*

The situation of the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire differed significantly from that of non-Muslim (Christian) groups in the Balkans such as the Serbs, Bulgarians, and Greeks. The Armenian population was scattered throughout Anatolia, and – with the exception of a few isolated towns in Van, Bitlis, and Cilicia – Armenians remained a non-dominant 'minority'. Notably, the number of Armenians in Istanbul was higher than in any city in Anatolia or even the historic Armenian highland. In almost every town in Anatolia, including western Anatolia, the Black Sea region, and central Anatolia, the number of Armenians was significant. However, while the Armenian population was substantial, it was not highly concentrated. As such, without a critical mass, the Armenian politicians were forced to demand equal treatment, democratic rights, and fair taxation, but fell short of calling for Armenian independence.[67]

The absence of democratic rights and the escalation of suppression under the Abdulhamid II regime triggered the birth of new Armenian political parties, with four soon emerging as the most influential within the Armenian community. The first Armenian political party, the Armenagan Party was organised in Van in 1885 by the students of Mgrdich Portugalyan, a famed Armenian intellectual. The party programme emphasised the importance of preparation for a revolution and the party members were particularly active in Van.[68] Another prominent political party, the Social Democrat Hnchagyan Party (Hnchag Party), was founded by a group of Armenian students in Geneva in 1887. Drawing from the romanticism of the Russian Narodniks, the Hnchags advocated for immediate revolution and the secession of six provinces from the Ottoman Empire through a Marxist revolutionary approach.[69] A group within the Hnchag Party wanted to eliminate the party's socialist doctrine, advocating that their efforts should solely focus on the independence of Armenia; consequently, this faction would soon establish the Reformed Hnchagyan Party in 1898.[70] The

Politics, Yaşar Tolga Cora, Dzovinar Derderian, and Ali Sipahi, eds. (London: I. B. Tauris, 2016), 149; Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide*, 44.

67 Hovannisian, 'The Armenian Question in the Ottoman Empire', 204–6; Panossian, *The Armenians from Kings and Priests*, 157–9.

68 Louise Nalbandian, *The Armenian Revolutionary Movement: The Development of Armenian Political Parties through the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963), 90–103.

69 Panossian, *The Armenians from Kings and Priests*, 203–5.

70 Nalbandian, *The Armenian Revolutionary Movement*, 129–30.

Federation of Armenian Revolutionaries was founded in Tiflis in the summer of 1890 and renamed a year later as the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF). Although the party programme involved socialist rhetoric, its primary concern was nationalism. For the ARF, socialism was a vehicle to achieve a nationalist goal. The ARF was the leading party among Ottoman Armenians and an ally of the CUP until the beginning of World War I.[71] Finally, the Constitutional Democratic Party was founded by a group of liberals in 1908. Popular among upper-class Armenians in Istanbul, the party supported the ideology of liberalism. In 1921, during the Armistice years, it was renamed the Ramgavar Liberal Party. Some members of the Armenagan Party and Reformed Hnchagyan Party also joined this newly formed political party. Although it endorsed the unity and independence of Armenia, the party favoured achieving this goal through negotiation and dialogue rather than revolutionary violence.[72]

Beginning of Violence

Following the Russo-Ottoman War in 1876–7, Muslim refugees poured into the capital and Anatolian cities with accounts of atrocities committed by the Bulgarians, Russians, Greeks, and Serbians in the Balkans and the Caucasus. The narratives that these refugees shared with the general Ottoman society profoundly increased distrust, discrimination, and anger towards the native Christian population in Anatolia.[73] After the signing of the Treaty of Berlin, the Armenians were increasingly considered a threat to Ottoman state unity. Any signs of political activity among the Armenian population were viewed as a significant threat to Abdulhamid II. In 1894, when the Armenians in Sasun raised their voices against the double taxation and harassment from the Kurdish tribes, the reaction from the Ottoman state was harsh.[74]

[71] For the history of the ARF, see Arsen Avagyan and Gaidz F. Minassian, *Ermeniler ve Ittihat ve Terakki: işbirliğinden Çatışmaya* [Armenians and the Committee of Union and Progress: From Co-operation to Conflict] (Istanbul: Aras Yayıncılık, 2005); Panossian, *The Armenians from Kings and Priests*, 205–10; Nalbandian, *The Armenian Revolutionary Movement*.

[72] Panossian, *The Armenians from Kings and Priests*, 203.

[73] Göçek, *Denial of Violence*, 114.

[74] Owen Miller, 'Rethinking the Violence in the Sasun Mountains (1893–1894)', *Études Arméniennes Contemporaines* 10 (2018), 97–123; Makdisi, *Age of Coexistence*, 81.

In response to the political demands for equal treatment, fair taxation, and democratic rights with regard to the 'Armenian Question', Abdulhamid II organised a series of plunders and massacres in 1895 and 1896.[75] The massacres began in Trabzon and spread to cities in the eastern provinces, including Erzurum, Bitlis, and Van. The Armenians in Istanbul also experienced the slaughter, which they had been heretofore spared. Consequently, in 1895 the Ottoman Armenians planned a major protest in the capital against the state violence taking place in the provinces. Organised by the Hnchags, the public demonstration devolved into a pogrom in which many Armenians in the capital were murdered.[76] Following the 1895 demonstration, Muslims living in the capital regarded Armenian political activity with suspicion and called for a boycott of Armenian businesses. Ottoman Armenians were ever more becoming a target of hatred and discrimination from Ottoman Muslims.[77] To draw the attention of the European powers to the massacres, a team of ARF-affiliated revolutionaries occupied the Ottoman Bank in Istanbul on 26 August 1896, took European bank employees hostage, and threatened to detonate the vault containing the bank's cash reserves.[78] Russian officials intervened and negotiated with the gunmen, and the assault ended. However, violence against the wider Armenian public in Istanbul continued to spread. In almost every quarter where Armenians lived, mobs of thugs and plunderers incited Muslims to attack their Armenian neighbours. During the disorder, approximately 6,000 Armenians lost their lives.[79] The Armenians of Istanbul experienced the government's calculated, complicit disregard for the first time. They witnessed dead bodies left in the streets

[75] Ronald Grigor Suny, 'The Sassoun Massacre: A Hundred Year Perspective', *Armenian Review* 47 (2001); Vahakn N. Dadrian, 'The 1894 Sassoun Massacre: A Juncture in the Escalation of the Turko-Armenian Conflict', *Armenian Review* 47 (2001); Panossian, *The Armenians from Kings and Priests*, 162; Robert Melson, *Revolution and Genocide: On the Origins of the Armenian Genocide and the Holocaust* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 66–70.

[76] Göçek, *Denial of Violence*, 128.

[77] Ibid., 129.

[78] Armen Garo, *Bank Ottoman: Memoirs of Armen Garo, the Armenian Ambassador to America from the Independent Republic of Armenia*, Simon Vratzian, ed., Haig T. Partizian, trans. (Detroit, MI: Armen Topouzian, 1990), 108–46; Arkun, 'Into the Modern Age', 81.

[79] Hovannisian, 'The Armenian Question in the Ottoman Empire', 225–6; Arkun, 'Into the Modern Age', 81; Panossian, *The Armenians from Kings and Priests*, 217; Makdisi, *Age of Coexistence*, 81.

for days, nurturing in them a profound empathy with Armenians from the provinces. Following the 1895–6 Hamidian massacres, a new wave of emigration to the United States and Europe emerged, with thousands of Armenians leaving the Ottoman Empire for safer ports. The Hamidian massacres were unlike the previous episodes of violence against Christian populations, in that they marked the beginning of a 'deliberate and systematic unravelling'.[80] The possibility of an Ottoman identity embracing all ethnic and religious groups was irreparably damaged after this first methodical episode of violence against Armenians.

Ottoman Revolution of 1908

Despite the Armenian political parties' attempts to defend Ottoman Armenians' rights, oppression under the Abdulhamid II regime continued to build until the Revolution of 1908, when the CUP, also known as the Young Turks, overthrew the sultan. Ottoman Armenians welcomed the Revolution, participating in celebrations both in Istanbul and the provinces.[81] Armenian intellectuals and community leadership believed that the Revolution would bring long-awaited equality and justice. Following the announcement of the Constitution, for instance, the Hnchag Party branch in Sivas made a public announcement that they fully supported the constitutional state, and they rejected any separatist aims, pledging to fight under the Ottoman flag against 'enemies of the Constitution'.[82] Similar statements were made by Armenian intellectuals and community leadership.[83]

In the elections of 1908, the CUP won a majority, and ten Armenians were elected as deputies to the Ottoman Parliament, five from the ARF and the remaining being liberals, independents, and members of the CUP and Hnchag parties. Soon after, the CUP introduced a new set of laws and regulations to decrease the power of the sultan and increase the influence of the Parliament in the policy- and decision-making

[80] Makdisi, *Age of Coexistence*, 82.
[81] Der Matossian, *Shattered Dreams of Revolution*, 23–48; Suny, *'They Can Live in the Desert but Nowhere Else'*, 156–60.
[82] Ohannes Kılıçdağı, 'Ottoman Armenians in the Second Constitutional Period: Expectations and Reservations', in *The Ottoman East in the Nineteenth Century: Societies, Identities and Politics*, Yaşar Tolga Cora, Dzovinar Derderian, and Ali Sipahi, eds. (London: I.B. Tauris, 2016), 165.
[83] Der Matossian, *Shattered Dreams of Revolution*, 53–5.

process. Even though the CUP membership was kept secret to the extent possible, following the Revolution, the number of people joining local CUP branches increased significantly, transforming the CUP's struggle to become a popular movement.[84]

While the CUP was consolidating its power in the capital, counter-revolutionary groups demanding the return of complete authority to Abdulhamid II formed in the provinces. By 1909, attacks and plunder began in Cilicia, carried out by factions loyal to Abdulhamid II, as well as members of local CUP branches. In the capital, military units supporting the counter-revolutionaries took control of state institutions such as the military garrisons and the building of the Sublime Porte. Hareket Ordusu (Army of Action), however, marched from Salonica under the command of Mahmud Şevket Paşa and soon retook the capital. When the army marched towards the capital to reinstate the Constitution, Talat Bey, a prominent CUP leader, organised a national assembly in Yeşilköy, with the participation of approximately 100 deputies. The ARF showed its support for Talat's initiative and backed the CUP.[85] Roughly 20,000 Armenians were killed in counter-revolutionary events in Adana and the surrounding towns.[86] What is significant here is that Armenian political parties, particularly the ARF, continued to support the CUP.[87] Rather than actively seeking external support and drawing the European powers' attention to their plight, they maintained the alliance with the CUP government to protect the constitutional regime.[88] Thus, despite violence and massacres, Ottoman Armenians did not campaign for Armenian independence but instead chose to prioritise building a democratic system in which they would find peace, security, and equal rights.

[84] Ibid., 88.

[85] Hans-Lukas Kieser, *Talaat Pasha: Father of Modern Turkey, Architect of Genocide* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2018), 72.

[86] Bedross Der Matossian, 'From Bloodless Revolution to Bloody Counterrevolution: The Adana Massacres of 1909', *Genocide Studies and Prevention* 6 (2011), 152–73; Ari Şekeryan, ed., 1909*Adana Katliamı: Üç Rapor* [1909 Adana Massacre: Three Reports] (Istanbul: Aras Yayıncılık, 2014); Panossian, *The Armenians from Kings and Priests*, 224.

[87] Dikran Mesrob Kaligian, *Armenian Organization and Ideology under Ottoman Rule: 1908–1914* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2009), 44–80.

[88] Hovannisian, 'The Armenian Question in the Ottoman Empire', 232; Suny, *'They Can Live in the Desert but Nowhere Else'*, 175.

Ottomanism and the CUP

The concept of 'Ottomanism' evolved over the course of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in the Ottoman Empire. In the nineteenth century, during the reign of Abdulhamid II, it was used as a synonym for Islamism, whereas after the Revolution of 1908, it came to be understood as the equality of all citizens, regardless of ethnicity or religion. Thus, the ruling power, be it Ottoman Sultan Abdulhamid II or the CUP, moulded the terms 'Ottomanism' and 'Ottoman nation' to meet their varying political agendas across time and space. In certain periods, Ottomanism was used as a cover to assimilate the non-Muslim population and on some occasions appeared as Islamism and Turkish nationalism.[89] For the use of 'Ottomanism' within the context of the Armistice years, I employ the term 'sympathetic Ottomanism' in this book as an ideology in which Muslim and non-Muslim populations of the Ottoman Empire were regarded as equal citizens. In 1918, Ottomanism represented the ideology of territorial nationalism, which is to say that all citizens were regarded as equal before the law. Particularly during the second half of 1918, when the Ottoman Empire's defeat was fast approaching, Ottoman Turkish intellectuals presented a 'sympathetic and attractive' version of Ottomanism to the non-Muslim populations to convince the leadership of non-Muslim communities that the Ottoman state could still provide democratic rights to all population groups, regardless of their ethnic and religious background.

While the CUP promised the creation of an Ottoman society in which equality, fraternity, and liberty of all subjects would be protected by the state, the political actions of the party made little effort to fulfil this promise. As early as 1910, at a CUP meeting in Manastır, Talat expressed that it was not possible to guarantee equality until they succeeded in 'Ottomanising' all citizens.[90] Indeed, the term 'Ottomanisation' here referred to the conversion of non-Muslims and the gradual assimilation

[89] For discussion of Ottomanism as ideology, see Ohannes Kılıçdağı, 'The Bourgeois Transformation and Ottomanism Among Anatolian Armenians After the 1908 Revolution' (MA thesis, Boğaziçi University, 2005), 56–67; Der Matossian, *Shattered Dreams of Revolution*, 49–71; Kemal Karpat, *Studies on Ottoman Social and Political History* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 27–74; A. L. Macfie, *The End of the Ottoman Empire, 1908–1923* (London: Longman, 1998), 113–19; Roderic H. Davison, *Essays in Ottoman and Turkish History, 1774–1923: The Impact of the West* (Austin: The University of Texas Press, 2011), 112–38; Suny, *'They Can Live in the Desert but Nowhere Else'*, 149–65.

[90] Kieser, *Talaat Pasha*, 86; Suny, *'They Can Live in the Desert but Nowhere Else'*, 164.

of non-Turkish groups in the process of Turkification. When Talat used the term 'Ottoman nation', he was referring to the assimilation of non-Turkish and non-Muslim groups; in contrast, the non-Muslims and non-Turkish groups employed the same term as an umbrella identity, where each of them was able to preserve their religion, identity, and language but at the same time be recognised as 'Ottomans'. For example, while the majority of Albanians and Arabs believed that decentralisation and local autonomy would save the Empire from collapse, the great majority of Ottoman Turks who supported the CUP believed that a powerful centralised state, administered by educated and trained bureaucrats and military officers, would gain the support of all citizens, regardless of their ethnic or religious background.[91] Thus, the perception of Ottomanism among the Ottoman Turkish and non-Muslim communities significantly differed; the former employed it as a political tool to keep the Empire united and centralised, while the latter welcomed the idea of Ottomanism to decentralise the state and to improve the democratic rights of ethnic and religious groups. While the non-Muslims and non-Turks envisioned a 'multicultural version of an Ottoman imperial citizenship', the CUP protested these claims, arguing that they were counter to the very definition of Ottomanism.[92]

One of the CUP's motivations was to increase the influence of *millet-i hakime* (ruling/dominant millet) and thus the Ottoman Turks. With this aim in mind, the CUP declared Turkish the state's official language and embarked upon a fresh campaign to impose its use in the daily lives of local ethnic groups. The CUP's intention was not to unify different ethnic and religious groups under the flag of the Constitution and the umbrella of an Ottoman nation but to render these various groups as 'common Ottomans' who would gradually lose sight of their previous ethnic and religious identities.[93] This policy – along with the Law of Associations, which prohibited the establishment of associations and political parties affiliated with ethnic and religious identities – increased suspicion among the Armenian intellectuals and wider community vis-à-vis the CUP.[94]

[91] Gingeras, *Fall of the Sultanate*, 27; Suny, *'They Can Live in the Desert but Nowhere Else'*, 158; Der Matossian, *Shattered Dreams of Revolution*, 177.
[92] Michelle U. Campos, *Ottoman Brothers: Muslims, Christians, and Jews in the Early Twentieth-Century Palestine* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011), 249.
[93] Gingeras, *Fall of the Sultanate*, 41; Der Matossian, *Shattered Dreams of Revolution*, 7.
[94] Kılıçdağı, 'Ottoman Armenians in the Second Constitutional Period', 170.

Even though the ARF was the CUP's primary ally after the Revolution of 1908, the unwillingness of the CUP to address the land ownership and security issues in the eastern provinces fostered a wariness and distrust among the ARF regarding the CUP's intentions. In 1911, the ARF issued a declaration stating that the CUP was retreating from the constitutional and democratic principles upon which it was founded and that, should the CUP continue this wayward trajectory, they would resist the government's policies.[95]

While the CUP policies following the Constitution were directed towards the centralisation of the state, the Armenian community leadership believed that the protection of communal semi-autonomous bodies related to civil, religious, and educational affairs was vital to preserve its ethno-religious identity and guard against total assimilation; Armenian political groups, intellectuals, and the Patriarchate had not renounced their communal rights for the sake of Ottoman citizenship.[96] While fully supporting the constitutional movement, they at the same time considered communal semi-autonomy and the decentralisation of the state as two necessary pillars for a peaceful and liberal Ottoman government.[97] While the Armenian community devoted itself to the ideas of revolution such as fraternity and equality between citizens regardless of religious background, the policies enacted diverged from those on paper.

Indeed, the CUP began to employ violence in place of democratic methods in confronting its opponents. In April 1909, a journalist writing for the *Serbesti* (Freedom) newspaper, Hasan Fehmi, was assassinated by CUP agents; similarly, the opposition journalist Ahmet Samim was murdered by CUP-affiliated agents in June 1910. Both journalists criticised the CUP's policies, its use of torture against political opponents, and the corruption of CUP officials involved in governmental affairs. Unsurprisingly, the investigations into their murders were fruitless, producing no suspects and leading to no arrests. Zeki Bey, the director of the Public Debt Administration, who was collecting evidence of the CUP's illegal activities, was murdered by CUP member Şükrü Bey. Famed Turkish author Tevfik Fikret, after witnessing the

[95] Gingeras, *Fall of the Sultanate*, 154; Suny, *'They Can Live in the Desert but Nowhere Else'*, 180.
[96] Kılıçdağı, 'Ottoman Armenians in the Second Constitutional Period', 171.
[97] Ibid., 173.

violence directed by the CUP towards the opposition, labelled the CUP as an 'armed band of dirty deeds and regression'.[98]

Beginning of Wars

The political developments, wars, defeats, and victories that Ottoman society experienced from 1911 to 1923 have lived on in the memory of the Turkish society and have played an important role in political culture in Turkey.[99] Before moving to the Armistice period (1918–23), it is necessary to touch upon the political and social developments that occurred during the 1911–18 period of continuous war.

In September 1911, Italy declared war on the Ottoman Empire and occupied parts of the province of Trablusgarp (Libya), the last remaining territory of the Ottoman Empire in North Africa. Weakened economically as well as militarily, the Ottoman military was unable to defend Trablusgarp against the Italian invasion.

Ottoman politics were divided between two major camps: on one side was the CUP and its allies, and on the other the anti-CUP contingent rallied around the Hürriyet ve İtilaf Fırkası (Freedom and Accord Party). One called the other 'traitor' and 'jurnalci' (labelling them as Abdulhamid supporters) and the other responded with 'Balkan terrorist' (the majority of CUP members originated from the Balkans).[100] Even though the CUP held power, its position at the time was fragile. Having lost the local election in Istanbul, it organised an aggressive electioneering campaign in order to prevent a national defeat. The 1912 election was marked by the CUP's campaign of coercion, intimidation, violence, and electoral fraud. The pro-CUP press published articles praising those opposition members who decided to join the CUP, and those who refused faced intimidation from the CUP authorities.[101] Prominent opposition leaders such as Rıza Tevfik, Gümülcineli Ismail, and Lütfi Fikri were obstructed from campaigning through various measures taken by the CUP authorities.[102] Naturally,

[98] Göçek, *Denial of Violence*, 182.
[99] Hans-Lukas Kieser, Kerem Öktem, and Maurus Reinkowski, eds., *World War I and the End of the Ottomans: From the Balkan Wars to the Armenian Genocide* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2015), 4.
[100] Baykal, *The Ottoman Press*, 78.
[101] Hasan Kayalı, 'Elections and the Electoral Process in the Ottoman Empire, 1876–1919', *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 27(3) (1995), 276.
[102] Ibid., 276.

the election results were in line with the CUP's projections, with the opposition receiving only a small portion of the total votes.

Refusing to accept the election results, a group of military officers sympathetic to the anti-CUP camp, Halaskar Zabitan (the Saviour Officers), orchestrated a coup against the CUP-backed government and established a cabinet consisting of experienced statesmen.[103] Ottoman army officers were now forced to take a side, either pro-CUP or pro-Halaskar.

The defeat at the hands of the Italians and the loss of Trablusgarp and the Dodecanese Islands was followed by the declaration of war against the Ottomans in the Balkans by four Christian nations: Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia, and Montenegro. The European powers did not intervene in the conflict directly, but each had its own interests in the Balkan region and the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire. While France and the British Empire were encouraging the Greeks, Bulgarians, and Serbs to launch an offensive against the Ottomans, Germany, observing the Ottoman army's lack of preparedness, believed that the Ottomans would form a defensive perimeter near Edirne.[104] The Habsburg Empire opposed any redrawing of the political map in the Balkans, while Russians mediated between the Balkan nations to reach a compromise.[105] Unexpectedly, four Balkan states vanquished the Ottoman army.

Traumatised by the defeat, the CUP command, led by Enver Bey, led a coup in January 1913, assassinating Minister of War Nazım Paşa. With the Treaty of London in May 1913, the Ottoman Empire had agreed to cede all Balkan regions and islands in the Aegean to the Greeks, Bulgarians, Serbians, and Montenegrins.[106] However, tensions continued to run high in the region. In late June 1913, the Bulgarians, whose national ambitions were unmet by the gains made in central Macedonia, mounted an attack on the Serbian lines, resulting in their own devastating defeat. While the Serbians and Greeks were attacking from the south, Romania launched an offensive from the north, forcing the Bulgarians to retreat.[107] Significantly, the Ottomans were able to

[103] Baykal, *The Ottoman Press*, 2; Kayalı, 'Elections and the Electoral Process', 277; Suny, *'They Can Live in the Desert but Nowhere Else'*, 182.
[104] Michael Provence, *The Last Ottoman Generation and the Making of the Modern Middle East* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 59.
[105] Gingeras, *Fall of the Sultanate*, 79.
[106] Ibid., 85; Suny, *'They Can Live in the Desert but Nowhere Else'*, 185.
[107] Gingeras, *Fall of the Sultanate*, 91.

recover Edirne, a former Ottoman capital which held great historical and cultural importance.

In June 1913, pro-Halaskar gunmen assassinated one of the most powerful figures of the Ottoman military, Mahmut Şevket Paşa, in Istanbul. After the assassins were accused of having ties to the opposition and convicted, Prince Sabahaddin, a major opposition leader, escaped execution by fleeing the country. Following the murder, the CUP set the stage for an authoritative regime by shuttering a number of opposition newspapers and deporting around 500 political opponents from Istanbul to Sinop and other Anatolian cities.[108] Any opposition to the CUP was extinguished without delay.[109] The killing of Mahmut Şevket Paşa provided the CUP with the justification to accelerate its drive towards total suppression.

Though no significant resistance remained after the removal and execution of opposition members from the capital, the CUP began to organise local populations throughout the Empire by establishing societies such as the National Defence Society and the Turkish Strength Society, intended to mobilise young Muslim men and groom them to be loyal patriots.[110] Soon these organised groups, whose supporters blamed the non-Muslims for the Empire's decline, spread propaganda calling for an economic boycott of non-Muslim businesses. In western Anatolia and eastern Thrace, the embargo movement targeted the Ottoman Romioi population in particular.[111] The CUP removed from office not only political opponents but also opponents in the Ottoman military. When Enver became minister of war in January 1914, high-ranking officers who were anti-CUP (or simply neutral) were forced to retire and vacate their positions for the younger officers, most of whom were loyal to the CUP.[112]

Post-Balkan Wars Psychology

Following the losses in the Italian–Turkish War and the Balkan Wars, the majority of Ottoman Turkish society began to believe that the Empire's dissolution was imminent and the Ottoman lands would be

[108] Yiğit Akın, *When the War Came Home: The Ottomans' Great War and the Devastation of an Empire* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2018), 23.
[109] Ibid., 23.
[110] Gingeras, *Fall of the Sultanate*, 93; Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, 122.
[111] Gingeras, *Fall of the Sultanate*, 94.
[112] Akın, *When the War Came Home*, 24.

completely lost to non-Muslims who were 'in collaboration with the European Powers'.[113] The French and Italian invasion of North Africa, Russia's occupation of the three provinces in the Caucasus in 1878, the British occupation of Cyprus and Egypt, and the loss of the Balkan region to the 'tiny Christian Balkan states' convinced Ottomans that they were encircled by the European – most notably, Christian – powers, who wanted to 'erase' the Ottoman Empire.[114] Witnessing the deplorable conditions of Muslim refugees in Anatolian towns and cities, Ottoman Muslims further united against native non-Muslim populations such as the Romioi, Armenians, and Assyrians, which were unremittingly blamed for the impoverishment of the state.[115]

The defeat that the Ottoman Empire faced during the Balkan Wars came as a great shock to CUP leaders such as Talat, Enver, and Bahaddin Şakir. According to Talat Paşa's wife, the saddest day in her husband's life was the day that the Ottomans lost Edirne, causing him to cry from sorrow.[116] Of the thirty-one members who joined the CUP Central Committee between 1908 and 1918, only five were originally from inner Anatolia, with the rest hailing from various regions of the Ottoman Balkans.[117] One prominent CUP leader, Cavid Bey, describing the loss of the Ottoman lands in the Balkans, lamented, 'A Turkey without Rumelia, an Ottoman government without Salonika. How unbelievable and unbearable!'[118] The loss of all of the Empire's European lands during the Balkan Wars transformed the CUP leaders into partisans of a Turkish nationalism which saw Anatolia as its homeland.[119] CUP leaders envisioned a centralised Turkish Muslim state in which Turks would be the leading group, while non-Turkish Muslim groups would be incorporated into society as Turkish-speaking Muslims.[120] Homogeneous Turkish Muslim unity was a precondition for the Ottoman state's survival in the eyes of these

[113] Göçek, *Denial of Violence*, 188.
[114] Hans-Lukas Kieser, 'The Ottoman Road to Total War (1913–1915)', in *World War I and the End of the Ottomans: From the Balkan Wars to the Armenian Genocide*, Hans-Lukas Kieser, Kerem Öktem, and Maurus Reinkowski, eds. (London: I.B. Tauris, 2015), 37.
[115] Gingeras, *Fall of the Sultanate*, 163; Suny, *'They Can Live in the Desert but Nowhere Else'*, 186.
[116] Göçek, *Denial of Violence*, 238. [117] Gingeras, *Fall of the Sultanate*, 151.
[118] Akın, *When the War Came Home*, 15.
[119] Kieser, *Talaat Pasha*, 9; Gingeras, *Fall of the Sultanate*, 56.
[120] Kieser, *Talaat Pasha*, 11.

leaders.[121] The majority of prominent CUP figures were Muslim refugees who believed that the strength of Balkan nationalism had surpassed that of Ottomanism. With Ottomanism as an ideal extinguished after the losses of the Balkan Wars, the CUP became a Muslim nationalist party, with Turks playing the central role.[122] They embraced a social Darwinist perspective to 'fight for the survival' of Ottoman Muslims. The Ottoman Turkish newspapers, periodicals, and pamphlets published images, articles, and illustrations depicting the misery of Muslims during the Balkan Wars, inflaming the collective anger of Muslims in Anatolia towards their non-Muslim neighbours.[123]

After the Balkan Wars, the CUP government sought to establish fresh relations with European powers such as Britain, France, and Germany to improve the isolated position of the Empire in international politics. The German military command was invited to reform the Ottoman military, whereas French and British advisers assumed oversight of a number of ministries.[124] While the CUP demonstrated an open-dialogue approach to foreign policy, it made no such gestures towards non-Muslims in domestic affairs.

The loss of the Aegean Islands to Greece following the Balkan Wars was of serious concern to the CUP government. In its view, these islands were vital for the defence of western Anatolia, and the Romioi populations living in the coastal regions would now be susceptible to the influence of the Greek state. The approximately 400,000 Orthodox Romioi living on the coast were a liability for CUP authorities, who then organised a widespread boycott of Romioi businesses in these coastal towns and cities to catalyse their displacement.[125] Faced with the propaganda of economic nationalism and the active boycott movement against non-Muslim businesses, many Orthodox Romiois fled the

[121] Ibid., 27.

[122] Emre Erol, '"Macedonian Question" in Western Anatolia: The Ousting of the Ottoman Greeks before World War I', in *World War I and the End of the Ottomans: From the Balkan Wars to the Armenian Genocide*, Hans-Lukas Kieser, Kerem Öktem, and Maurus Reinkowski, eds. (London: I.B. Tauris, 2015), 109.

[123] Y. Doğan Çetinkaya, '"Revenge! Revenge! Revenge!" Awakening a Nation Through Propaganda in the Ottoman Empire during the Balkan Wars (1912–1913)', in *World War I and the End of the Ottomans: From the Balkan Wars to the Armenian Genocide*, Hans-Lukas Kieser, Kerem Öktem, and Maurus Reinkowski, eds. (London: I.B. Tauris, 2015), 81.

[124] Akın, *When the War Came Home*, 39.

[125] Ibid., 44.

Empire.[126] In addition to this effective boycott, around 150,000 Romiois were expelled from the coast to the Greek islands and mainland in a successful deportation and demographic engineering campaign during the summer of 1914.[127] Even without a wholescale massacre during this deportation, CUP authorities realised the effectiveness of such campaigns in swiftly changing the demographic profile of a given region.[128]

The CUP's motivation behind the Romioi deportations was threefold. First, the party sought to ensure the Aegean coast's security, especially critical due to its close proximity to the Aegean islands. Second, Muslim refugees from the Balkans would then be settled in the properties evacuated by Romioi. Third, the demographic engineering campaign to maintain the integrity of the Turkish lands would commence.[129] Indeed, while speaking in the Ottoman Parliament in July 1914, Talat Paşa stressed that the Romioi population left their villages of their own will because of the Muslims' boycott and that the government needed those properties to settle the refugees. He insisted that he had not sent the Romiois to the deserts of Syria and Iraq because, as he stressed, many would have died.[130] However, only a few years later, the same government would order the deportation of Armenians to these very deserts.

Under increasing pressure from Russia, the Armenian Reform Act of February 1914 proposed by the European powers, which the CUP adamantly refused to accept and enact, was brought to the table. A significant step in resolving the 'Armenian Question', this plan would divide the six provinces in eastern Anatolia into two zones. Each would be governed by an inspector-general who would be appointed by the European powers and have authority over Ottoman administrative branches as well as the local gendarmerie.[131] The

[126] Erol, '"Macedonian Question" in Western Anatolia', 107; Morris and Ze'evi, *The Thirty-Year Genocide*, 151–3.

[127] Akın, *When the War Came Home*, 45; Erol, '"Macedonian Question" in Western Anatolia', 104; Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, 107; Morris and Ze'evi, *The Thirty-Year Genocide*, 148–51.

[128] Akın, *When the War Came Home*, 46.

[129] Kieser, *Talaat Pasha*, 169.

[130] Suny, *'They Can Live in the Desert but Nowhere Else'*, 213; Kieser, *Talaat Pasha*, 180; Erol, '"Macedonian Question" in Western Anatolia', 112.

[131] Akın, *When the War Came Home*, 49; Eugene Rogan, *The Fall of the Ottomans: The Great War in the Middle East* (New York: Basic Books, 2016), 164; Suny, *'They Can Live in the Desert but Nowhere Else'*, 203.

Armenian political parties united behind the reform plan, while the local Kurds protested it, as the proposed solution to the land disputes would cost them dearly.[132] The involvement of the Germans and Russians in the reform talks especially harmed the CUP's relationship with the ARF.[133] The CUP saw the reform demands of the Armenians as further attempts to 'create a Macedonia in Anatolia'.[134] Dutch diplomat Louis Constant Westenenk and Norwegian officer Nicolai Hoff were appointed by the Ottoman government as inspector-generals in accordance with the reform plan; however, their appointments were suspended upon their arrival in Istanbul with the declaration of the war.[135]

Though the CUP accepted the Armenian Reform Act, their intention, from the beginning, was to slow and delay the process of its implementation. In the summer of 1914, CUP authorities reached a secret alliance with the German Empire, which planned to use Ottoman Sultan and Caliph of Islam Mehmed V Reşâd's call to *jihad*, or holy war, to direct the Muslim populations in India, North Africa, and Central Asia to revolt against the British and Russian empires. In addition, CUP leaders – particularly Enver Paşa, who advocated for the German agreement – believed that a defence pact with a powerful empire such as Germany would force the Russian and British empires to halt their offensive plans against the Ottomans, thus maintaining the security of the Ottoman borders.[136]

When making the decision to go to war, the CUP government had two principal aims: first, 'a small border correction' in the Caucasus, which would return the regions occupied by the Russians since 1878, and second, the return of the islands in the Aegean Sea and the regions ceded to Bulgaria, Greece, and Serbia in the Balkans.[137] For the CUP

[132] Mehmet Polatel, 'Land Disputes and Reform Debates in the Eastern Provinces', in *World War I and the End of the Ottomans: From the Balkan Wars to the Armenian Genocide*, Hans-Lukas Kieser, Kerem Öktem, and Maurus Reinkowski, eds. (London: I.B. Tauris, 2015), 178–81.

[133] Kieser, *Talaat Pasha*, 161; Morris and Ze'evi, *The Thirty-Year Genocide*, 146.

[134] Kieser, *Talaat Pasha*, 156.

[135] Thomas Schmutz, 'The German Role in the Reform Discussion of 1913–14', in *World War I and the End of the Ottomans: From the Balkan Wars to the Armenian Genocide*, Hans-Lukas Kieser, Kerem Öktem, and Maurus Reinkowski, eds. (London: I.B. Tauris, 2015), 200; Suny, *'They Can Live in the Desert but Nowhere Else'*, 204.

[136] Gingeras, *Fall of the Sultanate*, 107; Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, 109–11.

[137] Gingeras, *Fall of the Sultanate*, 108.

regime, World War I was, from the social Darwinist point of view which they embraced, a 'fight for survival'. It was not only a war against the Allied Powers but a war against 'internal enemies' necessary for the 'survival of the Ottoman state'.[138] The CUP imagined that non-Arab Muslims could be brought under the sway of Turkish nationalism and assimilated into the Turkish Muslim society around which the state was centred.[139] In addition, the CUP prioritised the preservation of the state's borders and the establishment of full sovereignty.[140] As the historian Vahakn Dadrian describes, in the eyes of the CUP leadership, the Balkan regions were 'the arms and legs of the Ottoman Empire', whereas the provinces, where Armenians were living, were 'the digestive organs of the state'. From the CUP's perspective, 'one can live without his legs, but it is impossible to live without digestive organs'.[141]

Even though Enver and Talat were eager to enter the war on the side of the German Empire, one of the cabinet ministers responsible for the economy, Cavid Bey, renounced his ties to the government, arguing that entering the war would bankrupt the country, given its dire economic situation. Grand Vizier Said Halim Paşa also expressed his reservations about embarking upon war, but he did not resign his position.[142] All data available at the time indicated that it was not possible for the Empire to sustain the flow of food, ammunition, and supplies to the military for an extended period.[143]

In May 1914, however, the CUP proceeded with its war plan. As a first step, the regime suspended the Ottoman Parliament and Senate, to prevent any opposing voice being heard by Ottoman society, and made announcements for mass mobilisation.[144] In order to maintain troop levels, military service became universal throughout the Empire, as dictated by the Mükellefiyet-i Askeriye Kanun-ı Muvakkatı (Law of Military Obligation), which required all male citizens who were older than twenty, regardless of their religion, to perform military service.[145] Both the ARF and the Armenian Patriarchate expressed their concerns and protested the law, as it also applied to the sole breadwinners of

[138] Kieser, *Talaat Pasha*, 7.
[139] Kieser, Öktem, and Reinkowski, *World War I and the End of the Ottomans*, 14.
[140] Kieser, 'The Ottoman Road to Total War', 32.
[141] Vahakn N. Dadrian and Taner Akçam, *Judgment at Istanbul: The Armenian Genocide Trials* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2011), 168.
[142] Gingeras, *Fall of the Sultanate*, 109. [143] Ibid., 110.
[144] Akın, *When the War Came Home*, 53. [145] Ibid., 32.

families.[146] Yet, for the CUP, the war was a chance to transform the Empire into a politically and economically independent structure; freed from the influence of foreign businesses and the privileges endowed to them by 'capitulations' such as tax exemption, this presented the opportunity to create a system of ideal citizenry which would be loyal to the state.[147] For the CUP leaders, securing the Empire's territorial unity and political and economic independence took precedence over regaining the Empire's 'former glory'.[148] Rather than embracing egalitarian plurality in Ottoman society, the CUP leaders pursued a homogeneous Turkish Muslim unity for the state's survival, which violently excluded the non-Muslim communities.[149]

World War I and the Ottoman Empire

At the outset of the war, the CUP recognised the sheer scale of manpower that would be required against such an array of adversaries and initiated a mobilisation of its able-bodied men. The government's mobilisation call coincided with the agricultural harvest season. Authorities ordered thousands of Ottoman men who were the sole breadwinners of their families to abandon their livelihoods and join the ranks.[150] To ensure that men heeded the call to military service, a new law stipulated that failure to register at a recruitment centre within ten days of receiving orders was a crime punishable by death.[151] Nonetheless, by January 1915, the government had managed to mobilise only a small percentage of the male population.[152] Already at the outset of the war, the government repeatedly changed the conscription regulations by increasing the exemption taxes and widening the age range of eligible men.[153] The government's failures in systematically mobilising men, the high desertion rates, and economic difficulties including high inflation and a drop in agricultural production undermined Ottoman morale.[154]

[146] Ibid., 33.
[147] Mustafa Aksakal, *The Ottoman Road to War in 1914: The Ottoman Empire and First World War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 14.
[148] Ibid., 17. [149] Kieser, *Talaat Pasha*, 27–8.
[150] Akın, *When the War Came Home*, 57. [151] Ibid., 59.
[152] Melanie S. Tanielian, *The Charity of War: Famine, Humanitarian Aid, and World War I in the Middle East* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2018), 67.
[153] Ibid., 67. [154] Akın, *When the War Came Home*, 11.

With the Ottoman Empire's entrance into World War I, the CUP regime's next target was the press and intellectuals. The CUP soon introduced the censorship guideline in 1914.[155] For the next four years, the Ottoman press would be strictly censored by the military and even forced to publish falsified reports of the desperation of the enemy and the 'victories' of the Ottoman troops.[156] Any articles concerning the military or foreign and domestic politics – including the Armenian deportations and massacres, the scope of famine and contagious diseases, sanitary conditions, and the economic crisis at hand – were forbidden. The government reserved the right to ban any newspaper which criticised its policies and violated the censorship rules. Each publisher was asked to provide a copy of its upcoming newspaper issue to the censorship office, where it was read closely by officials; only after receiving their approval could the new issue be published and distributed.[157]

The Eighth World Congress of the ARF, held in Erzurum in July–August 1914, was a significant moment in relation to the CUP's approach to Ottoman Armenians just before the Ottoman Empire's entrance into World War I. While thirty Armenian delegates from various Ottoman provinces, the Russian Empire, Europe, and the United States were attending the Congress to discuss the ARF's political agenda, representatives of the CUP, Ömer Naci and Bahaddin Şakir, visited the Congress to negotiate with ARF authorities regarding their potential wartime intentions.[158] As part of the proposal, the CUP offered the establishment of an autonomous Armenia in the provinces of Erzurum, Van, Bitlis, Yerevan, and Kars, as well as a portion of Gandzag, if the ARF joined the Ottomans' struggle against Russia by organising revolts against the Russians in the Caucasus.[159] The CUP representatives also inquired as to how the ARF would react in the case of a Russian attack against the Ottoman Empire. The ARF authorities offered assurances that Armenians living in the Ottoman Empire would join the military and defend Ottoman lands against any attacks;

[155] Baykal, *The Ottoman Press*, 122. [156] Ibid., 122.
[157] Akın, *When the War Came Home*, 66.
[158] Yektan Türkyılmaz, 'Rethinking Genocide: Violence and Victimhood in Eastern Anatolia, 1913–1915' (PhD dissertation, Durham, NC, Duke University, 2011), 159; Zaven Arkebisgobos, Պատրիարքական Յուշերս Վաւերագիրներ Եվ Վկայութիւններ (Badriarkagan Hushers Vaverakirner Ew Vgayutyunner) [My Patriarchal Memoirs] (Cairo: Nor Asdgh, 1947), 87–9.
[159] Türkyılmaz, 'Rethinking Genocide', 160–1.

however, they did not immediately agree to organising revolts in the Caucasus, stating that they would need further information in order to bring the proposal to the ARF authorities who were in the Caucasus.[160] This disappointed the CUP representatives, who wanted pledges from the ARF of complete and loyal support against the Russian Empire.

The Ottomans' war strategy relied upon rapid offensives towards the Suez Canal and the Caucasus front against the British and the Russians, which produced disastrous results.[161] While CUP leaders believed that Egyptian antipathy towards the British would translate into support for the Ottoman state, this was not the case.[162] The troops on the Caucasus front were not properly equipped to march on the Russian positions under harsh weather conditions, with temperatures around minus forty degrees Celsius. Of 120,000 Ottoman soldiers, around half were either killed, wounded, or died of disease and cold.[163] With Cemal Paşa's failure to cross the Suez Canal and the troops' defeats in the Caucasus, the Ottoman Turkish elites and military officers in the capital began to lose hope as early as February 1915.[164]

For the CUP leadership, the war embodied a struggle against not only foreign powers but also 'internal enemies'. While the Ottoman military was facing defeats on two fronts, the CUP implemented a series of 'measures' to secure the state's independence.[165] By September 1914, the CUP regime had achieved a number of its wartime goals, such as rescinding the Capitulations (commercial privileges and extraterritorial rights granted to European states) and autonomy of Mount Lebanon, annulling the Armenian Reform Plan, and prohibiting international post.[166] Furthermore, with the declaration of war, the European powers' leverage to interfere on behalf of the Ottoman Empire's non-Muslims was voided. With their able-bodied men having been called to military service, the non-Muslim communities were more vulnerable to outside attacks.[167] The conditions were now ripe for the CUP to put into action its demographic engineering plans to 'secure' the last remaining lands of Anatolia for Ottoman Muslims.

[160] Ibid, 162.
[161] Gingeras, *Fall of the Sultanate*, 116–17; A. Alp Yenen, 'The Young Turk Aftermath: Making Sense of Transnational Contentious Politics at the End of the Ottoman Empire, 1918–1922' (PhD Thesis, Basel, University of Basel, 2019), 51.
[162] Gingeras, *Fall of the Sultanate*, 118. [163] Ibid., 120.
[164] Kieser, *Talaat Pasha*, 223. [165] Makdisi, *Age of Coexistence*, 84.
[166] Kieser, *Talaat Pasha*, 191. [167] Akın, *When the War Came Home*, 165.

Armenians living in the Ottoman Empire remained loyal to the Empire during World War I. The Armenian leadership, including the Patriarchate, and political parties such as the ARF appealed to its community and urged Armenian men to fight in the ranks of the Ottoman military to defend the Empire against the Allied Powers.[168] Thousands of Armenians enlisted in the Ottoman army and fought on the frontlines. Enver Paşa publicly thanked the Armenian community for its support of the Ottoman cause.[169] From the beginning of the war, Ottoman Armenians fulfilled their citizenship obligations to the Ottoman state. While the Armenian men took up arms, Armenian community members organised donation campaigns for the Ottoman military and expressed their loyalty through other patriotic acts. As Ottoman Armenians joined the ranks to fight for the Ottoman state's victory, the Armenian National Bureau in Tiflis co-ordinated Russian Armenian volunteers on the other side of the border to organise units within the Russian army with the purpose of 'liberating' Ottoman Armenia, a high-risk endeavour.[170]

Publicly, the CUP agreed to implement the Armenian Reform Plan and thanked Armenians for their support and enthusiasm to protect the Ottoman state. Privately, however, it was laying plans to order the deportation of the entire Ottoman Armenian population to the Syrian deserts.

Destruction of Ottoman Armenians

Following defeats in December 1914 and January 1915 by the Russian Empire on the eastern border, the CUP leadership decided to take 'measures' against the 'internal enemies' of the state – that is, the Armenians – who, in their eyes, were Russian collaborators.[171] When Armenian volunteers in Van took up arms to defend the city's

[168] Ibid., 166.
[169] Christopher J. Walker, 'World War I and the Armenian Genocide', in *The Armenian People from Ancient to Modern Times, Volume II: Foreign Dominion to Statehood: The Fifteenth Century to the Twentieth Century*, Richard Hovannisian, ed. (London: Macmillan Press, 1997), 245.
[170] Kieser, *Talaat Pasha*, 202; Suny, *'They Can Live in the Desert but Nowhere Else'*, 221; Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide*, 73; Zaven, Պատրիարքական Յուշերս Վաւերագիրներ Եվ Վկայութիւններ [My Patriarchal Memoirs], 49–51.
[171] Göçek, *Denial of Violence*, 202.

Armenian neighbourhood against an onslaught by Ottoman troops, the CUP used this small-scale uprising as justification to deport the entire Armenian population of the Empire. Talat Paşa's telegrams to the provincial governors decried the local Armenians' defensive actions in Van as a widespread Armenian rebellion throughout the eastern provinces, while also claiming that Armenian revolutionaries were pursuing their 'long-awaited independence goal'.[172] Parroting Talat's message, the governor of Bitlis, Abdülhalik Bey, argued that because the war was diminishing the number of Muslims in the region – and as Armenians already had the advantage of economic superiority – it was of utmost importance for the Ottomans to take 'measures' against them.[173] The CUP leadership spread misinformation that all Armenians were armed and intent on rebelling, as they did in Van, and that it was therefore necessary for the government to act decisively and without hesitation.

In April 1915, the CUP government ordered the arrest of Armenian intellectuals in Istanbul and sent them to isolated prisons in central Anatolia, where most of them were killed. Through the spring and summer of 1915, in all corners of the Empire, even cities far from the conflict zones, the CUP regime orchestrated the deportations. Convoys of civilians – including women, elderly, and children – were marched hundreds of miles without food, shelter, or proper clothing. Thousands of Armenian women were sexually assaulted and sometimes abducted by local Muslims, while Armenian men who had been conscripted were worked to death in the labour battalions.[174] Officially, the government claimed that Armenians were being deported from the areas close to the Russian border to prevent a possible Russian–Armenian alliance, but Armenians living in the Marmara region and Thrace, over 1,000 miles away from the Russian border, were also deported. As the indictments of the post-war military trials highlighted, it was not possible to explain the removal of Armenians from Bolu, a city located between Istanbul and Ankara, under the pretext of wartime measures to secure military frontlines.[175] The deportation process soon transformed into a 'death march', in which thousands of Ottoman Armenians perished due to

[172] Kieser, 'The Ottoman Road to Total War', 43.
[173] Kieser, *Talaat Pasha*, 250. [174] Akın, *When the War Came Home*, 169.
[175] Dadrian and Akçam, *Judgment at Istanbul*, 86.

infectious diseases, exposure to the harsh elements, and attacks by bandits. The state confiscated most Ottoman Armenians' properties during this period, and their wealth and businesses were subject to transfer.[176] For example, the mining industry in Diyarbekir and the cotton industry in the Adana region, which were largely run by Armenians, were handed to rising Muslim businessmen.[177] Churches, schools, and community centres were either plundered or destroyed.[178]

The Ottoman Interior Ministry closely monitored the deportation process. The Ministry sent officials to the provinces to collect information regarding abandoned Armenian properties, population statistics of Armenians who survived the initial deportations, and reports of local officials such as the governors and *kaymakam*s (district governors) as to whether they had implemented the central orders.[179] For instance, authorities labelled those who refused to enforce the deportation orders 'traitors to the fatherland', dismissed them, and replaced them with fanatic CUP supporters who would follow their commands

[176] Bedross Der Matossian, 'The Taboo within the Taboo: The Fate of "Armenian Capital" at the End of the Ottoman Empire', *European Journal of Turkish Studies* (2011); Uğur Ümit Üngör and Mehmet Polatel, *Confiscation and Destruction: The Young Turk Seizure of Armenian Property* (London: Continuum, 2013); Taner Akçam and Ümit Kurt, *The Spirit of the Laws: The Plunder of Wealth in the Armenian Genocide*, trans. Aram Arkun (New York: Berghahn Books, 2015); Ümit Kurt, *The Armenians of Aintab: The Economics of Genocide in an Ottoman Province* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2021).

[177] Kieser, *Talaat Pasha*, 273.

[178] The literature on the Armenian genocide has grown significantly over the last two decades. Below is a selective list of academic works written on the topic. Suny, *'They Can Live in the Desert but Nowhere Else'*; Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide*; Raymond Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide: A Complete History* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2011); Taner Akçam, *From Empire to Republic: Turkish Nationalism and the Armenian Genocide* (London: Zed Books, 2004); Taner Akçam, *The Young Turks' Crime against Humanity: The Armenian Genocide and Ethnic Cleansing in the Ottoman Empire* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013); Vahakn N. Dadrian, *The History of the Armenian Genocide: Ethnic Conflict from the Balkans to Anatolia to the Caucasus* (Providence, RI: Berghahn Books, 1995); Richard G. Hovannisian, *Remembrance and Denial: The Case of the Armenian Genocide* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1998); Richard G. Hovannisian, *Looking Backward, Moving Forward: Confronting the Armenian Genocide* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2003); Göçek, *Denial of Violence*.

[179] Akın, *When the War Came Home*, 170; Gingeras, *Fall of the Sultanate*, 175.

without question. Local Muslims who aided Armenians risked death by hanging, with their bodies displayed as a warning in front of the houses suspected of sheltering Armenians.[180]

A small number of prominent Ottoman figures did criticise the deportation orders. For example, Senator Ahmed Rıza, the former leader of the Nationalist wing of the Young Turk movement, declared, 'If there is a constitution in this country and constitutional rule, this [law on 'abandoned property'] must not be. It is a crime. Strong-arm me, expel me from my village, then sell my property: this is never lawful. No Ottoman conscience or law can ever accept this'.[181] Following these comments, Talat Paşa counselled the senator that if he continued to speak of the Armenian issue, he would raise the ire of the Muslim population, which would result in a significant increase in the killings of Armenians.[182] When the heir apparent to the Ottoman throne, Abdülmecid II, met with Minister of War Enver Paşa, he inquired regarding the accuracy of news reports related to the Armenian deportation and massacres; Enver Paşa answered, 'It is decided. It is the programme'.[183]

The CUP authorities employed separate methods of deportation in eastern and western Anatolia. While they transferred Armenians in western Anatolia via overcrowded railcars passing through Konya province, they forced Armenians in eastern Anatolia – thus, in the six provinces subject to the reform plan – to march on foot for hundreds of miles without proper food or clothing.[184] Although some Armenians had converted to Islam following the massacres in the 1890s, their adopted faith did not protect them in 1915–16. At the time of the deportation caravans, conversion was mostly prohibited, and those who had converted would later find themselves deported as 'Muslim Armenians'.[185] The armed paramilitaries of the Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa (Special Organisation), whose fighters were generally

[180] Dadrian and Akçam, *Judgment at Istanbul*, 88; Suny, *'They Can Live in the Desert but Nowhere Else'*, 285.
[181] Kieser, *Talaat Pasha*, 269; Suny, *'They Can Live in the Desert but Nowhere Else'*, 308.
[182] Kieser, *Talaat Pasha*, 278.
[183] Dadrian and Akçam, *Judgment at Istanbul*, 67.
[184] Akın, *When the War Came Home*, 168; Morris and Ze'evi, *The Thirty-Year Genocide*, 174.
[185] Kieser, 'The Ottoman Road to Total War', 45.

former bandits and prisoners who had been released to execute planned CUP operations, carried out the orders.[186]

Various factors directly impacted Armenians' survival outcomes, such as the provincial local governors.[187] For example, in the provinces of Diyarbekir, governed by Mehmed Reşid, and Trabzon, governed by Cemal Azmi, the vast majority of Armenians were deported. However, in Konya, governed by Celal Bey, and Kastamonu, governed by Reşid Bey, the deportation orders were not enacted. The district governor of Der Zor, Ali Suad, defied the CUP by resettling Armenian survivors in the region; punitively, he was replaced by order of Talat with Salih Zeki, who implemented further deportation orders in the summer of 1916.[188] Other major factors that determined the fate of Armenians included the geographic conditions of the regions (i.e., mountains, rivers, deserts), nearness to the borders, and the attitude of local elites towards the Armenian deportees.[189]

Within a year of the commencement of the deportations in 1915, by February 1916, Talat was already concerned about the potential return of Armenian survivors to their native lands in Anatolia.[190] To prevent this, Talat ordered the deportation marches to proceed further into the Syrian deserts, to ensure that any return would be impossible.[191] Despite the 'outcome' of the deportation campaign, in 1918, the CUP leadership still considered the complete eradication of the surviving Armenian population an existential matter. Enver Paşa, for example, argued that if even a small Armenian state was to be established in the Caucasus, the population of that state could grow to millions in the future and 'threaten the Turkish nation'.[192] Therefore, he insisted that, by any means necessary, the remaining Armenian population should be decimated to the point that it could never recover.[193]

[186] Suny, '*They Can Live in the Desert but Nowhere Else*', 219; Morris and Ze'evi, *The Thirty-Year Genocide*, 139; Dadrian and Akçam, *Judgment at Istanbul*, 137.

[187] Uğur Ümit Üngör, 'Explaining Regional Variations in the Armenian Genocide', in *World War I and the End of the Ottomans: From the Balkan Wars to the Armenian Genocide*, Hans-Lukas Kieser, Kerem Öktem, and Maurus Reinkowski, eds. (London: I.B. Tauris, 2015), 242; Suny, '*They Can Live in the Desert but Nowhere Else*', 321.

[188] Suny, '*They Can Live in the Desert but Nowhere Else*', 315; Kieser, *Talaat Pasha*, 272.

[189] Üngör, 'Explaining Regional Variations in the Armenian Genocide', 242.

[190] Kieser, *Talaat Pasha*, 265. [191] Ibid., 265. [192] Ibid., 366.

[193] Ibid., 366.

Despite CUP leaders' efforts, in May 1918, the Republic of Armenia was established in the Caucasus, which became a safe refuge for Armenian genocide survivors. In addition, the Central Powers' military situation deteriorated, with the Germans, Bulgarians, and Ottomans bested on the battlefield by the Allied Powers. It was in this atmosphere that Ottoman society first contemplated the ultimate defeat of the Ottoman Empire. Ottoman Turkish intellectuals and the public began to envision possible scenarios for post-war settlements. Ottoman Armenians, though devastated by the deportations and genocide, worked to unite and co-ordinate their efforts to protect their rights and very existence while the Empire's surrender was finalised. It is at this critical juncture that this book begins its analysis.

1 *The End of the Great War*

The idea of Ottomanism, which had receded into the background during the Balkan Wars and World War I, re-emerged in the last months of 1918 when an Ottoman defeat by the Allied Powers was all but inevitable.[1] The wartime propagation of Turkish nationalism by the Ottoman Turkish press gave way to a 'sympathetic Ottomanism', which aimed to bring the Empire's non-Muslim communities back into the fold, as a last effort to restore the government and preserve the Empire's unity. With the impending fall of the government, however, Turkish intellectuals cultivated fears of occupation and the possible dismemberment of the state at the hands of its non-Muslim populations, particularly the Armenians and Romioi.

The victory celebrations of Balkan Christians after the Balkan War of 1912–13 stirred fears among the Muslim population. At this point, the propagation of Turkish nationalism by the Ottoman Turkish press created a new atmosphere for Ottoman Muslims, which was used as a tool to steer the masses from Ottomanism to Turkish nationalism.[2]

[1] For a selective historiography on the Ottoman participation in World War I, see Michael A. Reynolds, *Shattering Empires: The Clash and Collapse of the Ottoman and Russian Empires, 1908–1918* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); A. L. Macfie, *The End of the Ottoman Empire, 1908–1923* (London: Longman, 1998); Eugene Rogan, *The Fall of the Ottomans: The Great War in the Middle East* (New York: Basic Books, 2016); David Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace: Creating the Modern Middle East, 1914–1922* (London: Penguin, 1991).

[2] The Balkan Wars, which took place in 1912 and 1913, resulted in the Ottoman Empire's loss of the majority of its European territory. Before the Balkan Wars, the primary policy of the Ottoman government was Ottomanism, which aimed at uniting the non-Muslim and Muslim communities under one umbrella, promoting a common 'Ottoman' identity; however, this policy was drastically reshaped after the loss of the Balkan lands changed the demographic map of the Empire. After the Balkan Wars, the Christian population of the Empire significantly decreased and the ruling government pursued a new policy of Turkish nationalism. For discussion on the impact of the Balkan Wars on Ottoman policy, see Özgür Balkılıç and Deniz Dölek, 'Turkish Nationalism at Its

Ottoman Muslim society was convinced after the Balkan Wars that the nucleus of the Turkish land must remain intact and that any partition of this core would cause the displacement of Muslims in Asia Minor.[3] This belief is evident in the reflections of Ottoman Muslims on the establishment of the Armenian state in the Caucasus. Although public opinion among Ottoman Turkish society reflected the fear that Ottoman Armenians would proliferate the idea of unification with an Armenian state in the Caucasus, it recognised the new state and outwardly welcomed it, finding security in its location beyond the Turkish nucleus' borders.

With this mindset, Turkish intellectuals were wary of the possible anti-Ottoman attitudes of the non-Muslim populations which might arise in the case of an Ottoman defeat. When the German defeats in Europe in the spring of 1918 took the Ottoman government in Istanbul by surprise, the Ottoman Turkish press published a flurry of articles directly addressing the non-Muslim communities, urging them to pledge loyalty to Ottomanism. The *Ati* (Future) paper, for instance, ran an editorial on the declaration of the Republic of Armenia in the Caucasus, which warned the Ottoman Armenians not to engage in any further revolutionary activity.[4] If Ottoman Armenians pledged loyalty to the Ottoman government, they would be welcome to continue to live within the Ottoman state's borders. Forgetting the 'Tashnagtsutiwn

Beginning: Analysis of *Türk Yurdu*, 1913–1918', *Nationalities Papers* 41(2) (n. d.), 316–33; Ümit Kurt and Doğan Gürpınar, 'The Balkan Wars and the Rise of the Reactionary Modernist Utopia in Young Turk Thought and the Journal *Türk Yurdu* [Turkish Homeland]', *Nations and Nationalism* 21(2) (2015), 348–68; Erol Ülker, 'Contextualising "Turkification": Nation-Building in the Late Ottoman Empire, 1908–18', *Nations and Nationalism* 11(4) (2005), 613–36; Ebru Boyar, 'The Impact of the Balkan Wars on Ottoman History Writing: Searching for a Soul', *Middle East Critique* 23(2) (2014), 147–56; Mustafa Aksakal, *The Ottoman Road to War in 1914: The Ottoman Empire and the First World War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Ebru Boyar, *Ottomans, Turks and the Balkans: Empire Lost, Relations Altered* (London: Tauris Academic Publishers, 2007).

[3] Especially following the devastating defeat the Ottomans suffered in the Balkan Wars, the CUP leaders discussed retreating to the 'Turkish heartland' of Anatolia. Thus, the term 'nucleus' is used to refer to Anatolia. For discussion of the CUP authorities' decision to retreat to Anatolia, see Fuat Dündar, *Modern Türkiye'nin Şifresi: İttihat ve Terakki'nin Etnisite Mühendisliği (1913–1918)* [The Code of Modern Turkey: The Committee of Union and Progress' Ethnic Engineering] (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2015), 58–62.

[4] *Ati*, 'Bizde Anasır Meselesi' [Nations Issue Among Us], 25 June 1918, no. 174.

past', a term used for the revolutionary activities of the Armenian political parties, was the critical step the Armenians must take in order to renew their relationship with the Ottoman government. It is noteworthy that the Armenian community was viewed as a united entity, 'all of whose members' were perceived to be 'revolutionaries and possible traitors'.[5]

The majority of Ottoman Turkish society wholeheartedly believed that the atrocities committed between the Ottoman Empire and Armenians during wartime were 'the products of foreign interference'. The Ottoman Turkish intellectuals argued that the newly established Armenian state would stay a friend of the Ottoman Empire if it were to declare there were no aspirations to take the six provinces. The newspaper *Vakit* (The Times) reminded Armenians of the lack of support from the Allied Powers in response to their request for military assistance: 'What shall we do? Our cannons could not reach Mt. Ararat'.[6] As a result, the paper advised the Ottoman Armenians to pledge loyalty to the Ottoman Empire to be seen as equal citizens. *Vakit* applauded those Armenian papers publishing articles in support of the idea of Ottomanism.[7] A few days later, *Vakit* elaborated on the fact that no state in the world, including neither Britain nor France, supported the establishment of a free Armenian state in the Caucasus, with the sole exception of the Ottoman Empire. The Allied Powers displayed no sympathy towards the Caucasus Armenians, and the German government prioritised the protection of Georgian rights in the region.[8] In contrast, the paper argued that the Ottoman government welcomed the establishment of the Armenian state in the Caucasus, immediately recognising its sovereignty. Furthermore, *Vakit* proposed that the Ottoman government provide assistance to the newly established

[5] *Ati*, 'Bizde Anasır Meselesi' [Nations Issue Among Us], 25 June 1918; *Verchin Lur*, Ouսմանցի Հայերուն (Osmantsi Hayerun) [To Ottoman Armenians], 25 June 1918, no. 1298.

[6] *Vakit*, 'Ermeni Meselesinin Tasfiye-i Hesabı' [Winding Up of the Armenian Question], 27 June 1918, no. 249.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Richard G. Hovannisian, *Armenia: On the Road to Independence 1918* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1967), 183. The German–Georgian agreement was reached in May 1918 at Poti. Germans were allowed to use the railways and ports of Georgia and even occupy some of the strategic points. The Georgians sought to protect themselves from the Bolshevik threat and preferred the German influence to that of the Bolsheviks. See David Marshall Lang, *A Modern History of Soviet Georgia* (London: Grove Press, 1962), 206–8.

Armenian state, as it in turn would wield influence over the Armenian diaspora communities. According to the paper, if the Ottoman government won the Armenian state's sympathy in the Caucasus, it would be possible to decrease the anger and enmity of the global Armenian diaspora directed towards it.[9] Moreover, by providing necessary assistance to the Armenian state, the Ottoman government could help establish a stable structure on its eastern border and cultivate a friendship that it could leverage to avert the ambitions of the Ottoman Armenians to unite with their compatriots.[10]

Along similar lines, *İkdam* (Perseverance) beseeched the Ottoman Armenians to understand that their fate was wedded to that of the Ottoman state. It was 'in their favour to return to serving as loyal, hardworking subjects of the state'; in doing so, they would be treated as equal citizens.[11] The Ottoman Turkish public demanded that Ottoman Armenians behave as 'proper Armenians'. They were to be considered brothers and sisters of the Ottoman Turks only if they proved their fealty to the Empire and did not engage in revolutionary activities. Celal Nuri, an Ottoman Turkish intellectual, provides an example of a 'proper Armenian' in an article describing a visit to his old friend Giragos Bey, an eighty-year-old Armenian merchant living in Istanbul. When Celal Nuri asked about the revolutionary and separatist aims of the Armenians, Giragos Bey reportedly answered: 'I am firstly an Ottoman and then an Armenian. There are 200,000 Armenians in Istanbul. They cannot be separated from the Turk. The fish cannot live out of the water. Like Catholics and Protestants in Germany, the Ottoman Empire has the Turk and the Armenian. People [Western powers] disturbed our comfort. How good it was in the past.'[12]

Celal Nuri brought this quotation to the attention of Ottoman public opinion intentionally to demonstrate a perfect model for being a 'proper Armenian'. There are two important characteristics to underline in this profile of Giragos Bey. As Celal Nuri conveyed, Giragos Bey was eighty years old (born in 1838, long before the Armenians made

[9] *Vakit*, 'Kafkas Siyasetimiz ve Ermeniler' [Our Caucasus Policy and the Armenians], 3 September 1918, no. 316.
[10] Ibid.
[11] *Verchin Lur*, Իգդամը Եւ Հայ Թերթերը (Ikdamě Ew Hay Terterě) [İkdam and the Armenian Press], 29 June 1918, no. 1302.
[12] *Verchin Lur*, Հայոց Մասին (Hayots Masin) [Regarding Armenians], 5 September 1918, no. 1359.

political demands) and a merchant (thus, Celal Nuri believed that he was not a political activist like the Tashnags or Hnchags). When Giragos Bey reminisced about 'how good it was in the past', he was referencing the 1860s, when the Ottoman state actively promoted the idea of a common imperial identity extending to all subjects, regardless of their ethnic and religious background. The 1869 Law of Nationality and the 1876 Ottoman Constitution provided a modern Ottomanism which rejected, at least on paper, discrimination between Muslims and non-Muslims.[13] This was also the time when the Armenian community organised its own Constitution and the Armenian National Assembly was opened in the capital. Until the Russo-Ottoman War in 1877, the Ottoman Armenians were accepted as *millet-i sadıka* (loyal millet) by Ottoman society because of their deferential behaviour vis-à-vis the state and their passivity in political affairs.[14] As Ronald Grigor Suny argued, 'without exaggerating the harmony of Turkish–Armenian relations between 1453 and 1878 or neglecting the considerable burdens imposed on non-Muslims, particularly Anatolian peasants, this long period can be seen as one of relatively "benign symbiosis"'.[15] Giragos Bey's comments can be viewed as a wish to return to a simpler time when there were no Armenian political parties – and, therefore, no pursuit of political autonomy – power was centred around the Patriarchate and wealthy Armenian *amira* and merchant families, and the Armenians both in cities and in the provinces were living within the social and political limits of the Ottoman millet system. In 1918, the Ottoman papers were publishing such articles to reawaken those times when the Armenians were the 'loyal millet', free of 'revolutionary ideas' and apolitically engaged in trade and commerce.

In response to the sentiments evoked by the Ottoman Turkish papers, the Ottoman Armenian community sought to regain the trust of Ottoman Muslims by publishing articles and opinions expressing the loyalty of Ottoman Armenians towards the state. With the ongoing war and political uncertainty at hand, Armenians – those having already survived the genocide – did not want to give Ottoman Turkish society any reason to again arouse hatred against them.

[13] Makdisi, *Age of Coexistence*, 78.
[14] Ronald Grigor Suny, *'They Can Live in the Desert but Nowhere Else': A History of the Armenian Genocide* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015), 48.
[15] Ibid., 44–5.

Verchin Lur published a lead article written by Avedis Surenyan, one of the paper's editors, in which the author echoed the thoughts previously expressed in the Ottoman Turkish press: 'We enthusiastically shake the brotherly hand that they extend to us . . . being the children of the same country, the Turk and the Armenian are forever equal and together . . . both would live happily. We greet with gladness this brotherly cordial expression.'[16]

Throughout the war, the Ottoman Armenian community suffered as the target of oppression, anger, and violence. With so many Armenian intellectuals either deported or killed and the majority of the Ottoman Armenian population now scattered throughout the Empire or in the wider diaspora, the Armenian community lay decimated.[17] Even though there was justifiable anger towards the Ottoman state and Turkish/Muslim society, Ottoman Armenians preferred to strategically wait until the end of the war when, in the safety of an Allied occupation of the Ottoman lands, they would reveal their political position. An editorial published in the 6 July 1918 edition of *Verchin Lur*, for instance, strongly supported the Turkish–Armenian friendship:

> Let's think for a moment. Who are the closest elements in this country? And is it even possible to distinguish Turks and Armenians from each other, these two elements who mostly have the similar appearance, behaviour and pronunciation . . . Don't we find Armenians and Turks most similar to each other in the plays of Mnagyan, Burhaneddin and Benliyan, who represent Turkish social life? Starting with our grandees, we wish to see each Armenian working for this [Turkish–Armenian brotherhood]. We call upon Armenian deputies, officials, leading merchants, intellectuals, teachers and editors to put extremely serious efforts towards the strengthening of Turkish–Armenian brotherhood.[18]

[16] *Verchin Lur*, Թրքահայերս (Trkahayers) [Turkish Armenians], 26 June 1918, no. 1299.

[17] For a selective list of academic works written on the Armenian genocide, see the Introduction.

[18] *Verchin Lur*, Թուրք Եւ Հայ Էղբայրակցութիւն (Turk Ew Hay Yeghpayragtsutiwn) [Turkish Armenian Friendship], 6 July 1918, no. 1307. Born in Istanbul in 1839, Mardiros Mnagyan helped found the Ottoman theatre, writing and translating hundreds of plays. Serope Benliyan was a famous Armenian theatre actor born in Istanbul in 1835. He spent his career travelling the cities of the Ottoman Empire – from the Greek islands to Edirne, from Cairo to Adana – to bring plays to the stage. Burhaneddin Tepsi was a Turkish theatre actor and writer born in 1882 in Tarsus, Adana.

Not only the Armenians in the capital or intellectual circles but also ordinary Armenians sent opinion letters to the Armenian papers to express their feelings. For example, an Armenian correspondent from Konya sent a letter to *Hayrenik* (The Fatherland) to express gratitude to the Ottoman authorities. According to this correspondent, there were 15,000 Armenians in Konya who were living in 'comfort and security'.[19]

At the same time that the newspaper columns were proclaiming the Armenian community's support of Turkish–Armenian friendship and its desire to return to the friendly pre-1877 relationship between Armenians and Ottoman Turks, the Ottoman Empire was still at war, and the statements of Armenians in response to the calls of Ottoman Turkish intellectuals must be understood in this context. Thus, the Armenian intellectuals were endorsing calls for a 'sympathetic Ottomanism', which was indeed a variant of Ottomanism put forward by the Ottoman Turkish intellectuals as a means to prevent the dismemberment of the Empire in 1918. The Armenian community leadership in Istanbul had no other choice but to issue such endorsements to prevent any further violence targeting the Armenian community.

End of the Game: Signing of the Armistice of Mudros

Ottoman Armenians' political position was largely pro-Ottoman until October 1918, as evidenced in the discussions between Armenian and Turkish intellectuals. While the dialogue continued in the capital's press, the political reality was that, for all practical measures, the Ottoman Empire had essentially surrendered when Bulgaria signed a separate ceasefire agreement with the Allied Powers on 29 September 1918.[20] When Grand Vizier Talat Paşa was in Berlin in 1918 to seek a resolution to the disagreement between Germany and the Ottoman Empire over the

[19] *Verchin Lur*, Իգնամ Եւ Հայ Թերթերը (Ikdam Ew Hay Terterě) [İkdam and the Armenian Press], 29 June 1918, no. 1302.

[20] The Armistice of Salonica was signed on 29 September between the Bulgarian government and the French General d'Esperey, who signed the ceasefire on behalf of the Allied Powers. The Bulgarian government accepted the complete demobilisation of its army and the evacuation of occupied Greek and Serbian lands. For the detailed terms of the armistice, see Richard C. Hall, 'Bulgaria in the First World War', *The Historian* 73 (2011), 300–315; 'Bulgaria Armistice Convention, September 29, 1918', *The American Journal of International Law* 13(4) (1919), 402–4.

Caucasus, he learned of the heavy German defeats on the Western Front. He conducted negotiations with Austrian authorities in Austria to offer a joint peace agreement to the Allied Powers.[21] Upon arriving in Bulgaria following his diplomatic visits to Berlin and Vienna, Talat Paşa witnessed the Bulgarian army's disintegration. The Bulgarian leaders met him at the train station to inform him of the separate peace agreement they had requested. When he heard news of the Bulgarian ceasefire, he stopped and stared for a moment, mumbling a Turkish phrase: '*Şimdi boku yedik*' ('We are in deep shit').[22]

Indeed, Talat Paşa had reason to be concerned. While the CUP government had valiantly fought for a German victory, not only had it faced internal resistance from opposition groups protesting the pro-German policies but also the Allied Powers pressured the CUP on several issues, including the Armenian genocide, which it declared a 'crime against humanity and civilisation'.[23] Bulgaria was the bridge linking the Ottoman capital to Berlin, which was of utmost importance to the CUP government. It was a lynchpin in the transportation scheme of both military and financial assets from the German capital to Istanbul. On the other hand, Enver Paşa, with his ambitious, unrealistic strategy, proclaimed that by turning attention to the Eastern Front and launching an attack on the Caspian Sea, Britain would be forced to submit to signing an agreement bearing equal terms for both sides.[24] Enver's push into the Caucasus required the redeployment of troops from the Palestinian and Mesopotamian fronts to the region, thus opening the way for a complete British victory.[25]

[21] Gwynne Dyer, 'The Turkish Armistice of 1918, 1: The Turkish Decision for a Separate Peace, Autumn 1918', *Middle Eastern Studies* 8 (1972), 149.

[22] Ibid., 150.

[23] Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide: Imperialism, Nationalism, and the Destruction of the Ottoman Armenians*, 137; Richard G. Hovannisian, 'The Allies and Armenia, 1915–18', *Journal of Contemporary History* 3 (1968), 147; Pars Tuğlacı, *Tarih Boyunca Batı Ermenileri 1891–1922* (Istanbul: Pars Yayın, 2004), 667; Lerna Ekmekçioğlu, *Recovering Armenia: The Limits of Belonging in Post-Genocide Turkey* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2016), 5.

[24] Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace*, 367.

[25] D. K. Fieldhouse, *Western Imperialism in the Middle East 1914–1958* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 43. In 1918, Enver Paşa transferred most of the Ottoman forces to the east to support a campaign against Armenia, Georgia, and Persia. He aimed to reach Central Asia through the Caspian Sea to win the support of the Turkic population for the Ottoman Empire. The troops returning from Galicia and Romania were directed to the east, and Enver Paşa was able to reorganise them as eight functional combat divisions. Two and a half divisions

By August 1918 – after the 8 August defeat of the German army on the 'Schwarze Tag', which saw the British unleash a crushing tank/armoured attack at Amiens[26] – it was clear that the only salvation for the Ottoman Empire was to ask the Allied Powers for a peace agreement.[27] However, the position of the Ottoman Empire was far different from that of the Habsburg Empire and Bulgaria, both of which had lost nearly all of their armies. In contrast, the Ottoman Empire still had active forces on the battlefields of Syria and the Caucasus. Nevertheless, by late summer of 1918, approximately 500,000 Ottoman soldiers had deserted, many of whom took to the hills of Anatolia, acting as bandit gangs. Throughout the war, desertion had been a serious problem for the Ottomans but by the summer of 1918, it reached disastrous proportions. Though weakened, the army still contained approximately 100,000 troops; the Ottoman economy, on the other hand, was on the brink of collapse, with the public debt having risen threefold since 1914.[28] In 1918, prices rose twenty-fivefold, a previously unimaginable rate of inflation.[29] Food shortages led to famine not only in the provinces but also in Istanbul.

It was evident by the spring of 1918 that there was no longer anything resembling a unified strategy in the CUP cabinet. The cabinet members were irritated that Enver Paşa had not informed them in a timely manner regarding the situation of the German army and his clandestine endeavours in the Caucasus.[30] While Enver Paşa and his

were sent directly to the Baku front to form 'the Caucasus army of Islam', and they captured Baku on 15 September 1918. It is noteworthy that during the war, the CUP's policy focused on Pan-Turanism; thus, the Arab lands that were still under the Ottoman Empire at the beginning of the war began to lose their strategic value to the CUP government. For example, Ziya Gökalp, a prominent intellectual of the CUP, published articles in March 1918 arguing that independent Arab states would be established. For details, see Dyer, 'The Turkish Armistice of 1918, 1: The Turkish Decision for a Separate Peace, Autumn 1918'.

26 Gwynne Dyer, 'The Turkish Armistice of 1918, 2: A Lost Opportunity: The Armistice Negotiations of Moudros', *Middle Eastern Studies* 8(3) (1972), 314.

27 Dyer, 'The Turkish Armistice of 1918, 1', 144.

28 Ibid.; Vedat Eldem, *Harp ve Mütareke Yıllarında Osmanlı İmparatorluğunun Ekonomisi* [The Economy of the Ottoman Empire during War and Armistice] (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1994), 130–2.

29 Fieldhouse, *Western Imperialism*, 43; Eldem, *Harp ve Mütareke Yıllarında Osmanlı İmparatorluğunun Ekonomisi*, 143–8.

30 Dyer, 'The Turkish Armistice of 1918, 1', 148.

allies vowed to continue the fight, Talat Paşa and his circle were prepared to accept peace terms with the Triple Entente.

Ultimately, the Ottoman Empire was made to sign an armistice agreement which stipulated harsh terms, including the loss of sovereignty, lands, and the dissolution of the regime itself. After the CUP government's resignation on 8 October 1918, the newly established government – composed of CUP members as well as independents and moderates – decided to reach an agreement with the Allied Powers, with negotiations commencing between the Ottoman and British delegations on the battleship HMS *Agamemnon* in Lemnos on 25 October 1918.[31] After prolonged discussions, Rauf Bey, representative of the Ottoman delegation, accepted the articles, provided that Admiral Calthorpe, head of the British delegation, personally deliver a letter of assurance stating that the Greeks would not occupy Istanbul and Izmir.[32] Rauf Bey bore suspicions about the seventh clause of the armistice agreement,[33] which allowed the Allied forces to occupy any place within the Empire if any threat to Allied security was perceived. Ultimately, on 30 October 1918, the two sides signed the Armistice of Mudros and the Ottoman government accepted conditions so exacting that even the British, who helped draft the terms, did not see them as just.[34]

[31] Article 1 read: 'Opening of the Dardanelles and Bosphorus and secure access to the Black Sea. Allied occupation of Dardanelles and Bosphorus forts.' Dyer, 'The Turkish Armistice of 1918, 1'; Dyer, 'The Turkish Armistice of 1918, 2'. According to the official statistics of the Ottoman Empire, in 1914, the Romioi (Greek Orthodox) population in Istanbul was 205,000 of the 560,000 total inhabitants, while in Izmir the Romioi population was 73,000 of the 207,000 total inhabitants. See Kemal Karpat, *Ottoman Population, 1830–1914: Demographic and Social Characteristics* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1995), 170, 174.

[32] Gwynne Dyer, 'The Origins of the "Nationalist" Group of Officers in Turkey 1908–18', *Journal of Contemporary History* 8(4) (1973), 121–64.

[33] Article 7 of the Armistice of Mudros is as follows: 'The Allies to have the right to occupy any strategic points in the event of a situation arising which threatens the security of the Allies.' For the developments during the negotiations for ceasefire between the Ottoman and Allied delegations, see Dyer, 'The Turkish Armistice of 1918, 1'; Dyer, 'The Turkish Armistice of 1918, 2'.

[34] Indeed, no one in the British Cabinet expected that the Ottoman Empire would demand an armistice after the Bulgarian collapse. The Ottomans had performed well in the Caucasus and were still fighting on the southern front, and they continued to hold out in Syria, despite being vastly outnumbered by the British. See Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace*, 364.

'Christ Is Risen': Reflections after the Signing of the Armistice of Mudros

The tone of the Armenian and Ottoman Turkish press soon transformed in the wake of the CUP government's resignation. For Ottoman Armenians, the government's dissolution was a bright light finally appearing at the end of the tunnel whereas dissenting opinions started to emerge among Ottoman Turks, and Turkish intellectuals began to voice a wave of sharp criticism of the CUP's wartime authoritarian policies. This development altered the tone of the press: Ottoman Turkish society lost its previously united political position in support of the CUP while at the same time Ottoman Armenians became more vocal in demanding their fundamental democratic rights. They asked that the new cabinet, on behalf of the Armenian victims and survivors, return their constitutional rights immediately.[35]

On the very day of the signing of the Armistice of Mudros, the elation was evident in the Armenian community. On 1 November 1918, *Verchin Lur* announced the Armistice with a heading, 'The Whole Capital Celebrates and Goes into Raptures', and the lead article, titled 'Today's Enthusiasm: The Flags of the Entente Fly Splendidly', opened with a passage which reflected the Armenian political transformation: 'Քրիստոս յարեա՛ւ ի մեռելոց!' (Krisdos Haryaw I Merelots!) ['Christ is risen from the dead!']. It is noteworthy here to point out that, as I have already discussed, a few months before the signing of the Armistice of Mudros, *Verchin Lur* was calling on Armenian intellectuals and the public to support Armenian–Turkish friendship and to be loyal citizens of the Ottoman state.

The flags of Greece, Italy, France, and Britain were flying on the streets of Istanbul's Pera neighbourhood, with Christians greeting each other: 'Christ is risen from the dead! Blessed is the resurrection of Christ!' According to an Armenian correspondent, the streets were full of people crying with joy. The Armistice of Mudros, perceived as salvation for Ottoman Armenians, was likened to the resurrection of Jesus, imbuing it with a divine meaning. The correspondent was worried that this celebration would end like those held after the announcement of the Ottoman Constitution's restoration in 1908: 'The scene

[35] *Verchin Lur*, Ի՞նչ Կ՚ուզեն Հայերը Նոր Դահլիճէն (Inch Guzen Hayerě Nor Tahlijen) [What Do Armenians Want from the New Cabinet?], 15 October 1918, no. 1393.

clearly reminded me of the Constitution announcement days ten years ago, which, sadly, later in incapable hands became a dictatorship causing bloodsheds that this unlucky country suffered for four years.'[36]

The Armistice opened a new stage in the history of Ottoman Armenians. The publications of the Armenian press reflected a reaction from the Armenian community which had been suppressed during wartime. This repressed reaction was indeed a pent-up anger towards Turkish Muslim society and the CUP government in particular. The pro-Turkish/pro-Ottoman approach of the Ottoman Armenians drastically changed with the signing of the Armistice of Mudros, for the existential threat to their community had been extinguished (see the article shown in Figure 1.1). There would be a second rapid change in the Armenian political position, especially after the victories of the Turkish National Movement.

Armenians regarded Ottoman Turkish intellectuals, as well as Ottoman Turkish public opinion, as supporters of the CUP's crimes. Onnik, an Armenian voluntary correspondent for the *Artaramard* (The Battle of Justice) paper, highlighted how the Ottoman Turkish press

Figure 1.1 The Allies and Armenia (*Zhoghovurt*, 19 November 1918)
Courtesy of the National Library of Armenia

[36] *Verchin Lur*, Այսօրուան խանդավառութիւնը (Aysoruan Khantavarutiwnĕ) [Today's Enthusiasm], 1 November 1918, no. 1407.

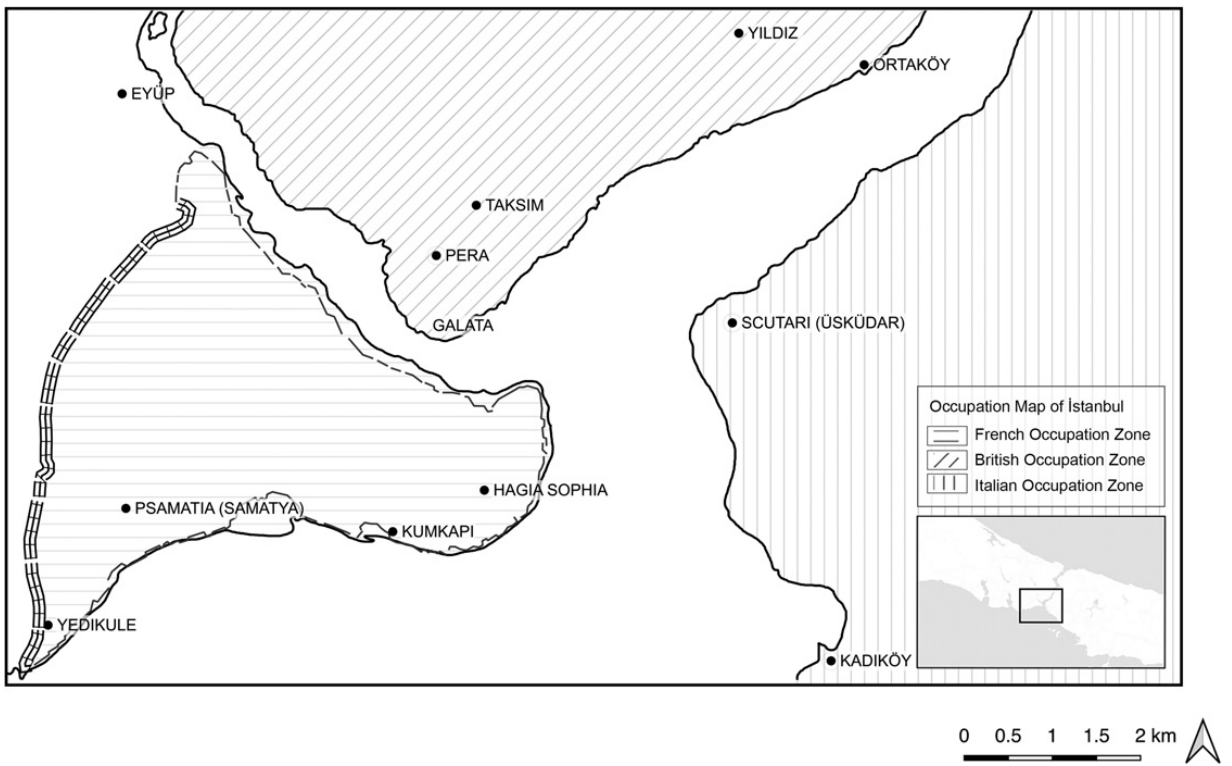
had played a crucial role during the deportations and encouraged the CUP leaders in their crimes. He reported that the lead author of *Tasvir* (Picture), Yunus Nadi, wrote many articles during the war supporting the CUP's deportation decision. Giving a second example, Onnik argued that the lead author of *Ati*, Celal Nuri, wrote provocative articles in wartime, urging the government to take action against Ottoman Armenians. Onnik asked in the conclusion: 'How can Armenians forget these words?'[37] This latent anger towards Ottoman Turkish society could be traced in another editorial published in the *Piwzantion* paper. According to the article, the call of the Ottoman Turkish papers to unite under the idea of Ottomanism was farcical, the insincerity of which had been proven by the Ottoman wartime actions.

> Today the situation is as follows: Armenians, Greeks and all non-Turks witnessed such horrifying policies against them that they understood that there is an element in this country which clearly wants to annihilate them. We experienced this and extremely bitterly. We do not believe anymore that these events were the work of one person. A few or thousands, it does not matter for us. The whole Armenian population in the provinces has been annihilated, Armenian women and girls have been ravished, almost 3,000 churches and monasteries have been plundered ... Why are they [Turkish papers] upset when we write about our condition the way we understand it? Again, we don't have the right to open our mouths?[38]

The political position of Ottoman Armenians changed from pro-Turkish to pro-Allied in the space of only a few months. Before the signing of the Armistice of Mudros, the Armenian papers urged their readers to collaborate with the Ottoman Muslim community but after the Armistice of Mudros, a pro-Entente approach emerged among the Armenians. Secessionist ideas began to be published in the Armenian papers once the Ottoman capital was occupied by Allied troops (see Map 1.1) and the oppressive regime was no longer in power. Similar to the cases of Hungarian minorities in Slovakia and Romania in the 1990s, for instance, when the possibility of external support appeared, the political discourse among the Armenians began to

[37] *Artaramard*, Թուրք Մամուլին Ահաւոր Պատասխանութիւնը Մեծ Եղեռնին Մէջ (Turk Mamulin Ahavor Badaskhanutiwnĕ Medz Yeghernin Mech) [The Horrible Responsibility of the Turkish Press in *Medz Yeghern*], 28 November 1918, no. 1823.

[38] *Piwzantion*, Օրուան Պէտքը (Oruan Bedkĕ) [The Need of the Day], 15 November 1918, no. 7736.



Map 1.1 Occupation map of Istanbul

radicalise.[39] As Erin K. Jenne argues, the Hungarian ethnic groups in Slovakia and Romania became more vocal and radicalised when the Hungarian government sent signals of protection and support in the 1990s.[40] In Ottoman Armenians' case, it is possible to argue that there were grievances caused by the wartime policy of the CUP government; however, the sudden shift is best explained by the fact that the Ottoman Empire surrendered, the capital was occupied, and the flags of the Allied states were hung on the streets of Istanbul. Ottoman Armenians were politically galvanised only after the de facto occupation of lands by the Allies, which openly declared their support for Armenian independence.

Flight of the CUP Leaders

To avoid possible prosecution, the CUP triumvirate – Talat, Enver, and Cemal Paşa – fled Istanbul onboard a German submarine on the night of 1 November 1918.[41] Although the government authorities were informed of the escape in advance by the intelligence services, the Minister of the Interior Ali Fethi, himself a CUP member, took no action to prevent it.[42] The CUP leaders' flight incensed Ottoman Armenians as it demonstrated that the new government did not intend to hold those responsible for their people's massacre accountable for their crimes.[43]

A group within Ottoman Turkish society sought to create distance from the former CUP government and its ideology.[44] Significantly, the

[39] I use the term 'radicalisation' for the process in which the political demands of the Ottoman Armenians became more vocal. Thus, I use this term for the mobilisation of the majority of the community.

[40] Erin K. Jenne, *Ethnic Bargaining* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2007), 97–116.

[41] *Zhamanag*, Փախչող Փաշաները (Pakhchogh Pashanerě) [Escaped Paşas], 4 November 1918, no. 3344; *Verchin Lur*, Հետաքրքրական Մանրամասնութիւններ Երեք Փաշաներու Փախուստին Շուրջ (Hedakrkragan Manramasnutiwnner Erek Pashaneru Pakhusdin Shurch) [Interesting Details on the Escape of Three Paşas], 4 November 1918, no. 1334; Tuğlacı, *Tarih Boyunca Batı Ermenileri*, 722.

[42] Erik Jan Zürcher, *The Unionist Factor: The Role of the Committee of Union and Progress in the Turkish National Movement, 1905–1926* (Leiden: Brill, 1984), 72.

[43] *Zhoghovurt*, Իրարու Վրայ Կը Նետեն Հայկական Ջարդը Եւ Գերմանիա (Iraru Vray Gě Neden Haygagan Chartě Ew Kermania) [They Blame Each Other for the Armenian Massacres and Germany], 7 November 1918, no. 15.

[44] The approach of a group of the Ottoman Turkish community to distance themselves from the CUP is documented in the opinion articles and editorials

Ottoman Turkish papers – those that had lent support to different political parties, such as the Hürriyet ve İtilaf Fırkası (Freedom and Accord Party) – vocally criticised the CUP government's wartime crimes in an effort to disassociate themselves from the party. Halide Edip, a prominent Turkish intellectual who supported the Turkish National Movement during the Armistice years, published an article in *Vakit* regarding the Ottoman Armenian community. While the article primarily advocated that a joint commission – consisting of Armenians, Americans, and Turkish officials who protected the lives of Armenians during the genocide – be set up by the newly established Ottoman government to investigate the Armenian massacres, it also discussed the wartime crimes of the CUP:

> To ingratiate the Turkishness, so to say, we carried out a campaign to annihilate the Christian population, particularly the Armenians, by medieval methods. As a responsible nation, the whole burden is put on our shoulders because of the atrocities that went on for years . . . Now, these have been dark and hopeless days for our nation. And the worst thing that saddens us is that America and Britain see us as a state that killed her own innocent population including their children and oppressed them.[45]

Velid Ebüzziya in *Tasvir-i Efkar* (The Picture of Ideas) similarly discussed the responsibility of Ottoman Turks for the CUP's crimes, emphasising that it was a very small group of people who bore responsibility, not the entire Ottoman Turkish population. While he

published in the Ottoman Turkish papers. Especially during the first months after the signing of the Armistice of Mudros, being an Ittihadist (CUP supporter) was equal to being a criminal. Even the CUP itself changed its name, reincarnating as Teceddüt Fırkası (Renewal Party) following the signing of the Armistice. For articles criticising the CUP, see *Alemdar*, 'Bilinmesi Lazım Bir Hakikat' [A Truth That Needs to Be Known], 10 June 1919; *Türkçe İstanbul*, 'Firariler ve Akıbetleri' [Deserters and Their Fate], 8 December 1918; *Türkçe İstanbul*, 'Çetenin Marifetleri' [The Cunningnesses of the Band], 8 September 1919; *Türkçe İstanbul*, 'Ittihatçı Ruhu' [The Soul of the Unionist], 12 November 1918; *Türkçe İstanbul*, 'Ittihat ve Terakki' [Union and Progress], 13 November 1918; *Peyam*, 'Ermeni Kıtalinden Kimler Sorumludur?' [Who Is Responsible for the Armenian Massacres?], 10 September 1919; *Peyam*, 'Ittihat ve Terakki ve Turan Fikri' [Union and Progress and the Idea of Turan], 15 September 1919.

[45] Halide Edip, 'Wilson'un Şartları Karşısında' [Before the Wilson's Terms], *Vakit*, 22 October 1918, no. 357. *Verchin Lur* published the Armenian translation of Halide Edip's article and thanked her for her support of Armenians. *Verchin Lur*, Խալիտէ Էտիպ Հանըմ (Khalide Edib Haněm) [Ms Halide Edip], 22 October 1918, no. 1398.

acknowledged that the Armenians would understandably want to voice and vent their pain and suffering, he also insisted that they were not the sole victims but that the Muslim population had been equally targeted.[46] This notion of Muslims also being victims of massacres would become a major theme in official Turkish historiography in the subsequent decades.

Minber (The Pulpit), which counted among its shareholders Mustafa Kemal, pursued the same strategy to distance itself from the CUP government and promote Turkish–Armenian friendship by stressing 'the shared history' of the two nations.[47] The paper as evidence gave a proverb describing the Armenians as Christian Turks, stating that the only difference between an Armenian and a Turk was one went to a church and the other one to a mosque. The paper concluded its argument as follows:

> One of the biggest and most unforgivable responsibilities of the previous government was the actions that they carried out on the Armenian nation. If annihilating all the Armenians from earth was acceptable, what was the benefit in this besides the damages? This fault that was done by a clique disrupted the friendship between the two nations, who have lived together for centuries, shared the same values and filled each other's economic, social and political lives.[48]

The opposition to CUP policy in the Ottoman Turkish press and public opinion grew significantly during the first months of 1919. It was a necessity to identify the guilty party, with the only possible

[46] *Tasvir-i Efkar*, 'Zalim Kim? Mazlum Kim?' [Who Is the Tyrant? Who Is Oppressed?], 28 October 1918, no. 2543; *Verchin Lur*, Որո՞նք Են Պատասխանատուները Հայոց Գլխուն Եկած Փորձանքներուն (Oronk En Badaskhanadunerě Hayots Klkhun Yegadz Portsanknerun) [Who Are Those Responsible for the Disaster That Befell the Armenians?], 28 October 1918, no. 1403.

[47] Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk), together with Ali Fethi (Okyar), who was the interior minister at the time the CUP leadership escaped the country, and Dr Rasim Ferid Bey, first published the *Minber* on 1 November 1918. The daily, published until 22 December 1918, tried to create distance from the CUP by criticising its wartime deeds. It is claimed that Mustafa Kemal also contributed articles to the daily under the pseudonym Hatib. For a detailed discussion on this topic, see Dilek Çavuş, 'Mustafa Kemal'in Basınla ve Minber Gazetesiyle İlişkisi' [Relationship between Mustafa Kemal, the Press and the Minber Daily], *Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi Dergisi* 29(71) (2008). Fethi Tevetoğlu, 'Atatürk'le Okyar'ın Çıkardıkları Gazete: Minber' [Atatürk and Okyar's Newspaper: Minber], *Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi Dergisi* 13(5) (1988).

[48] *Minber*, 'Ermeni Terbiye-i Milliyesi' [The National Education of Armenians], 9 November 1918, no. 9.

culprit being the CUP. The opposition movement claimed that, had the CUP not ruled the country, the Ottoman Turks would have continued to govern peacefully as they had done for more than 500 years. Interestingly, during the subsequent decades, the CUP's responsibility for the Armenian deportation and massacres would completely disappear in Turkish historiography, and ultimately historians would argue that the CUP was not at fault, endorsing the 'precautions' that the CUP regime took against the Ottoman Armenians.

Some segments of Turkish society attempted to disown the CUP and the crimes it committed during the war. For example, Kaptan Osman, a correspondent for *Türkçe İstanbul* (Turkish Istanbul), wrote an open letter to the Ecumenical and Armenian Patriarchates, stating that the atrocities organised by the CUP against the Christian population were a product of the CUP's genocidal policy and thus could not serve as an indictment against all Turks. He concluded: 'Either we were Turks and they were not, or they were Turks and we were not ... Not on any account were we involved in those events, moreover we were also the victims of those atrocities and violence'.[49]

The signing of the Armistice of Mudros and the CUP government's resignation were two seismic events, which shook Ottoman internal politics. The Empire had signed its defeat, and the CUP's authoritarian war regime, which had lasted five years, disappeared from the political scene – at least in theory. The celebrations of non-Muslims after the signing of the Armistice and the strong criticism of the CUP that appeared in the newspapers were indicative of this changing political environment. The next section will focus on the political aspirations of Ottoman populations during this time of constant transition.

Efforts for the Establishment of a 'United Armenia' and the Wilsonian Principles

Woodrow Wilson, the twenty-eighth president of the United States, formulated the Fourteen Points, a document originally prepared in 1917 and publicly unveiled in a speech in January 1918. The Fourteen Points outlined the United States' peace terms for the resolution of World

[49] *Türkçe İstanbul*, 'Rum Ermeni Patrikleriyle Bütün Alem-i İnsaniyet ve Medeniyete Karşı Açık Mektup' [An Open Letter to the Armenian and Romioi Patriarchs and the Whole Civilised World], 17 March 1919, no. 157.

War I. The points were based on the principle of self-determination for national minorities who had suffered under imperial oppression and undemocratic states.[50] Indeed, the principles put forward by the American president rippled through oppressed minority communities around the world, breathing new life into their struggles for independence, many of which had been carried on for decades. Minorities' demands in the political field reached such a fervour that the president himself was forced to revise his remarks and clarify that he was not giving blanket support to all struggles for independence.[51]

For instance, President Wilson was aware of neither the large numbers of Germans living within the borders of Bohemia, then a part of Czechoslovakia, nor the extent of ethnic minority populations in Eastern Europe.[52] Furthermore, he did not take into consideration the potential implications of the Fourteen Points outside Europe.[53] His idea was based on an Anglo–US historical framework of nationalism, which considered nations in civic rather than ethnic terms, as 'a community of organisation, of life and of tradition'.[54] His Fourteen Points played an important role in the post-war settlement and, most importantly, laid the foundation for a scheme for national minorities to establish their own state. Furthermore, according to the principles, disputed areas were to be decided by plebiscite and those ethnic groups that were too small or too dispersed were eligible for protection through special minority regimes.[55] However, in practical terms, the implementation of the principles was not feasible and Wilson himself acknowledged that if minorities were provided with cultural rights, it could ultimately discourage them from separatist ideas.[56] According to

[50] Allen Lynch, 'Woodrow Wilson and the Principle of "National Self-Determination": A Reconsideration', *Review of International Studies* 28(2) (2002), 425.

[51] Ibid., 426. [52] Ibid.

[53] Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 10–11.

[54] Lynch, 'Woodrow Wilson and the Principle of "National Self-Determination"', 435; Anthony Whelan, 'Wilsonian Self-Determination and the Versailles Settlement', *The International and Comparative Law Quarterly* 43(1) (1994), 100.

[55] Whelan, 'Wilsonian Self-Determination and the Versailles Settlement', 100–101.

[56] Lerna Ekmekçioğlu, 'Republic of Paradox: The League of Nations Minority Protection Regime and the New Turkey's Step-Citizens', *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 46 (2014), 665.

Wilson, non-European populations would consequently achieve self-determination not through violent and sudden revolutions but through democratic reforms, which would be supervised by the 'advanced powers' in their colonial territories.[57] Egyptians, Indians, Chinese, and Koreans for example, as detailed by Erez Manela in his authoritative book, attempted to demonstrate to the Western world that their nations met the 'standard of civilisation' and deserved self-determination.[58] Similarly, the Wilsonian principles became an important concern for Turks, Greeks, and Armenians at the beginning of the Armistice period (see Map 1.2). Articles scrutinising the Wilsonian principles were published in the papers and drew the attention of the public. Firstly, the principles implied the loss of Arab lands for the Ottoman Empire. Because it was not possible to establish a Turkish majority in the Arab lands, the Turkish public accepted their loss. Nevertheless, from the beginning, Asia Minor and Eastern Thrace were accepted as the natural borders of the Turkish people, given the fact that ethnic Turks and Turkish-speaking Anatolian Muslims constituted the dominant community in these regions.[59]

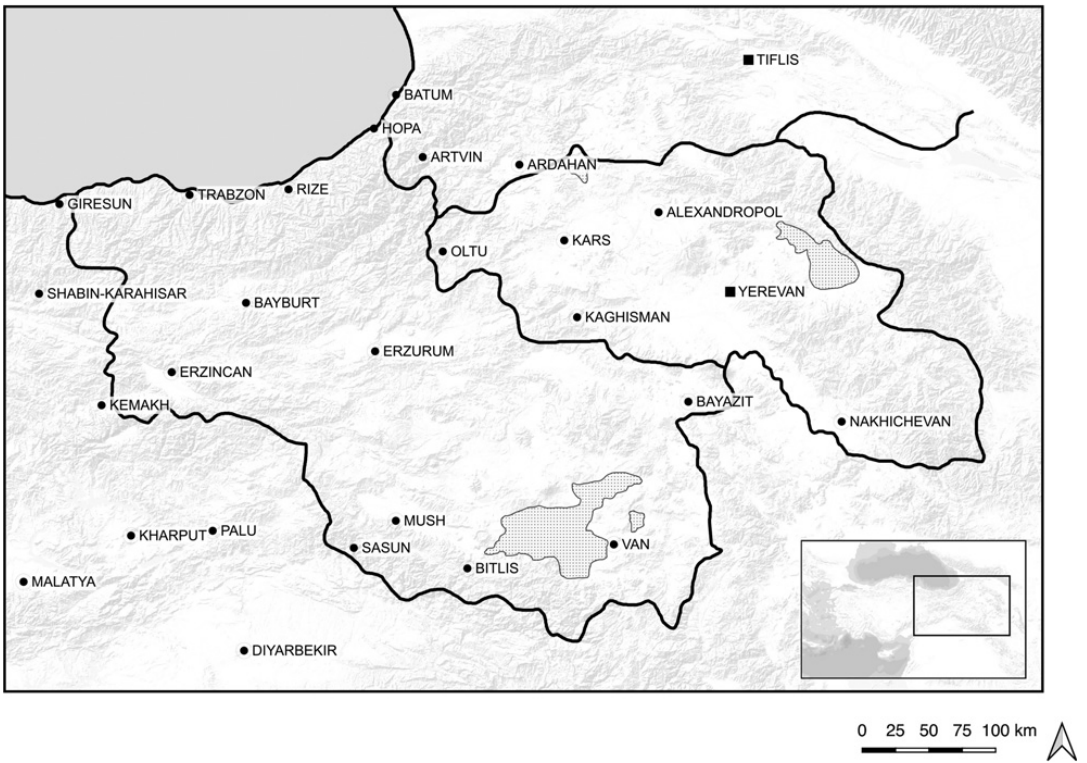
On 6 December 1918, the Wilson Prensipleri Cemiyeti (Society for the Wilsonian Principles) was established by Turkish intellectuals.[60] The society defended the idea that since Muslims composed the numerical majority of the population in Anatolia, it was in accordance with the Wilsonian principles that the Turkish nation had the right to complete independence. It announced nine reforms that required urgent implementation, addressing democratic, judicial, and electoral rights for non-Muslims – including the right to serve at every level in government – as well as self-governance for the provinces.[61] The political mindset of the Ottoman Turks focused on the Muslim majority

[57] Manela, 25. [58] Manela, 202–3.

[59] *Verchin Lur*, Նոր Թուրքիան Պատմական Եւ Աշխարհագրական Տեսակետով (Nor Turkian Badmagan Ew Ashkharhakragan Desagedov) [The New Turkey from Geographical and Historical Perspective], 21 October 1918, no. 1397.

[60] See Mehmet Şahingöz and Vahdet Keleşyılmaz, 'Millî Mücadele Dönemi Türk Basınında Wilson Prensipleri' [The Wilsonian Principles According to the Turkish Press during the National Struggle], *Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi Dergisi* 35 (1996).

[61] *Verchin Lur*, Ուիլսընի Սկզբունքներու Ընկերութիւնը (Uilsěni Sgzpunkneru Ěngerutiwně) [The Society for the Wilson Principles], 6 December 1918, no. 1437.



Map 1.2 The Wilsonian Armenia
(including the borders of the Republic of Armenia)

throughout the nucleus of the Turkish land. In accordance with the Wilsonian principles, the Allied occupation was to come to an end and demands for independence by Armenians and Anatolian Romioi were to cease.

In December 1918, propagandist population statistics regarding the provinces that were subject to separation from the Ottoman state began to appear in the pages of Ottoman Turkish newspapers. For example, *Yeni Gün* (The New Day) stated that in Adana, which was subject to French occupation, along with the high mountains, cities, and towns inhabited by Turkmen tribes, the majority of the population were of Turkic origin, were Muslim, and spoke Turkish. Attempting to separate Adana and İçel by whatever means was akin to 'separating the most crucial organ from the body of a human being'.[62] Süleyman Nazif's *Hadisat* (Incidents) paper similarly published a series of articles which scrutinised the Kurdish population in the eastern provinces. According to the population statistics provided by *Hadisat*, the Kurdish population in Van and Bitlis numbered more than 800,000, whereas the Armenian population was less than 170,000.[63] Ottoman Turkish intellectuals put forth that all Muslims of the Empire – whether Kurdish, Circassian, or Turkic – were considered Turks. Therefore, defending the Islamic character of the provinces meant defending the Turkishness of the state.[64] In response to the allegations of the Ottoman Turkish papers, Hagop Der Hagopyan, in an editorial published in *Verchin Lur*, argued that Armenians were ready to welcome an independent Kurdish state in eastern Anatolia as neighbours;

[62] *Yeni Gün*, 'Adana Kilikya Türktür Türk Kalmalıdır' [Adana (Cilicia) is Turk and Should Stay Turk], 8 December 1918, no. 90. According to the statistics that *Yeni Gün* published, there were 130,000 Turks and 5,000 non-Muslims in İçel, as well as 380,000 Turks and 40,000 Armenians in Adana. It was noted that Adana had a long history of Turkish rule starting from the Selçuk Empire, Ertuğrul Gazi, and continuing under the Ottomans.

[63] *Hadisat*, 'Kürtler-Ermeniler' [Kurds and Armenians], 14 December 1918, no. 56; *Hadisat*, 'Kürtler-Ermeniler' [Kurds and Armenians], 13 December 1918, no. 55; *Hadisat*, 'Kürtler-Ermeniler' [Kurds and Armenians], 12 December 1918, no. 54.

[64] As Erik Jan Zürcher argues, especially during the first two years of the Armistice (1918–20), the rhetoric of Turkish intellectuals was based on Islam rather than Turkish nationalism. They defended the notion that because the majority of Anatolia was Muslim, it was therefore naturally an indivisible part of the Turkish state. Erik Jan Zürcher, 'The Vocabulary of Muslim Nationalism', *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 137 (1999), 81–92.

however, he questioned the readiness of the Turkish community to see an independent Kurdish state.[65]

Tashink (The Pact) also responded to Süleyman Nazif's statements, accusing him of making false allegations. An Armenian volunteer correspondent, Zareh, responded to the claim that after the wartime Armenian massacres, Armenians in these provinces were no longer the dominant community. Zareh claimed Armenians possessed a superior ability amongst the other ethnic communities in the region, arguing that only they 'had the talent to govern themselves as well as other ethnic groups'. He contended that, while the Armenians were a minority in the region, they had proven in the past they had the necessary capacity to govern both themselves and others.[66]

On the Ottoman Turkish Muslim side, besides the propaganda of the intellectuals appearing in the newspapers, a CUP-organised structure, the Vilayat-i Şarkiye Müdafa-i Hukuk Cemiyeti (Society for the National Defence of the Rights of the Eastern Provinces), played a crucial role in publicising the demands of local Muslims in the eastern provinces. Most importantly, the organisation voiced its strong opposition to the idea of an independent Armenia. The society called a meeting in October 1918 on the matter, agreeing upon collectively fighting the Armenian demands.[67] The following decisions were made at the meeting: first, the society pledged to protect the rights of Turkish and Kurdish elements under the Ottoman Empire's auspices. Second, the members agreed to publish a collection of evidence regarding 'the Armenian atrocities in the eastern provinces' to prove that not only Muslims but also Armenians were responsible for massacres. Third, the group proposed the publication of a French newspaper to spread the word through Europe of the atrocities committed upon Muslims by Armenians. The society published a Turkish paper, *Hadisat*, to respond to the Armenians' claims regarding the establishment of an Armenian state in the Vilayât-ı Sitte. The paper additionally published French translations of some articles. A prominent member of the society, İlyas Sami Efendi, deputy of Muş, clarified the group's position in an

[65] *Verchin Lur*, Օրուան Վիճակը (Oruan Vijagě) [Situation of the Day], 13 December 1918, no. 1447.

[66] *Tashink*, Քանակը Թէ Որակը (Kanagě Te Oragě) [Quantity or Quality], 14 December 1918, no. 1816.

[67] *Ariamard*, Արեւելեան Նահանգները Փրկելու Համար (Arevelyan Nahanknerě Prgelu Hamar) [To Save the Eastern Provinces], 15 December 1918, no. 21.

interview, asserting that Armenians had never formed a majority anywhere in eastern Anatolia. While accepting that during the deportation process 'bad things' had happened to Armenians, the massacres, he argued, were the scheme of a relatively small group of officials and had not been perpetrated by the Muslim population at large. Furthermore, according to him, Armenians massacred thousands of innocent Muslims during the Russian invasion, thus necessitating the deportations.[68]

At the same time, the Ottoman Armenian public's attention was focused on the Armenian delegation's visit to Paris for the Paris Peace Conference, which opened in January 1919. The aim of the conference was for the victorious states to discuss peace and the terms to be imposed on the Central Powers.[69] Two Armenian delegations participated in the conference to give voice to Armenian demands, one representing Ottoman Armenians and the other representing the newly established Armenian state in the Caucasus. However, before the opening of the conference, in December 1918, the Armenian delegations in Paris announced the establishment of the Cabinet of United Armenia (Հայկական Կառավարութիւն). United Armenia's borders were intended to include Cilicia, the six provinces in Anatolia, and the lands of the Republic of Armenia in the Caucasus.[70] Whispers among the establishment of a cabinet for a 'United Armenia' were already appearing in the columns of the Armenian papers in the Ottoman capital. According to *Ariamard* (The Battle of Braveness), though it was too early to officially declare the cabinet's establishment, Boghos Nubar Paşa would serve as president,[71] Kapriel Noradunkyan as

[68] *Verchin Lur*, Թէ Ինչեր Կը Բարբառին ... Թուրքերը Անպարտ Են Հայու Արիւնէն (Te Incher Gĕ Parparin ... Turkerĕ Anbard En Hayu Ariwnen) [What Do They Speak of ... The Turks Are Not Responsible for the Armenian Blood], 21 December 1918, no. 1450.

[69] Margaret MacMillan, *Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World* (New York: Random House, 2003); Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace*.

[70] *Zhoghovurt*, Հայաստանի Անկախութեան Հռչակումը (Hayasdani Angakhutyan Hrchagumĕ) [The Declaration of the Independence of Armenia], 20 December 1918, no. 58.

[71] Boghos Nubar was born in 1851 in Istanbul. He was the son of Nubar Paşa, who served as prime minister of Egypt. He received his education in engineering from the École Centrale des Arts et Manufactures and worked as the director of administration for the Egyptian railways. He actively participated in the organisation of the Armenian communities in Cairo and Alexandretta, where he

foreign minister,[72] Vosgan Mardigyan as interior minister,[73] and Arshak Chobanyan[74] as minister of education. It was reported that Yervant Ahaton,[75] Minas Cheraz,[76] and two Armenian members

founded the Armenian General Benevolent Union in 1906. During the Balkan Wars in 1912–13, on the order of the Catholicos of the Mother See of Echmiadzin Kevork V, he lobbied in Europe to gain the support of European countries for Armenian autonomy. He was the head of the Armenian delegation at the Paris Peace Conference with Avedis Aharonyan in 1919. See 'Nupar, Boghos', Հայկական Հարց Հանրագիտարան (Haykakan Harts Hanragitaran) ['Boghos Nubar', The Encyclopaedia of the Armenian Question] (Yerevan: Haykakan Hanragitarani Glkhavor Khmbakrutyun, 1996), 379–80.

72 Kapriel Noradunkyan was born in 1852 in Istanbul. After receiving his education in political science and law at the Sorbonne in Paris, he became a professor of law at the Mekteb-i Hukuk-ı Şahane (Royal Academy of Law) in Istanbul. In 1908, he was appointed the minister of trade, and he later became the minister of foreign affairs and served during the Balkan Wars in 1912–13. After World War I, he became an ardent supporter of the Armenian cause and supported the independence of the Ottoman Armenians. See 'Noradunkyan, Gabriel', Հայկական Հարց Հանրագիտարան (Haykakan Harts Hanragitaran) ['Kapriel Noradunyan', The Encyclopaedia of the Armenian Question] (Yerevan: Haykakan Hanragitarani Glkhavor Khmbakrutyun, 1996), 358.

73 Vosgan Mardigyan was born in 1867 in Erzincan. He received his higher education in Istanbul and served in various governmental positions for many years. He was the minister of the posts and telegraphs service from 1913 to 1914. At the beginning of World War I, he opposed the entry of the Ottoman Empire into the conflict and because of his stance he was forced by the CUP authorities to resign. He found refuge in Cairo in 1920. See Raymond Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide: A Complete History* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2011), 845.

74 Arshak Chobanyan was born in Istanbul in 1872. He attended Getronagan, a prestigious Armenian high school in the city, and was interested in literature, poetry, and philosophy. In 1893 he moved to Paris and in 1898 published the *Anahid* literary journal. During the war, he assiduously worked to mould public opinion on the Armenian massacres, working closely with Boghos Nubar. See 'Chopanyan, Arshak', Հայկական Հարց Հանրագիտարան (Haykakan Harts Hanragitaran) ['Arshak Chobanyan', The Encyclopaedia of the Armenian Question] (Yerevan: Haykakan Hanragitarani Glkhavor Khmbakrutyun, 1996), 374.

75 Yervant Ahaton was the son of Krikor Ahaton, the first Christian minister in the Ottoman Empire. He received his education in agriculture and engaged in agricultural projects in Egypt. He was a member of Armenian General Benevolent Union and close friend of Boghos Nubar. See *Verchin Lur*, Հայկական Դահլիճը (Haygagan Tahlijě) [The Armenian Cabinet], 26 December 1918, no. 1454.

76 Minas Cheraz was born in Istanbul in 1852. He participated in the Congress of Berlin in 1878 as a member of the Armenian delegation. In 1908, following the announcement of the Constitution, he was elected president of the Armenian National Assembly in Istanbul. During wartime, he moved to Paris and continued to contribute to the Armenian cause. See 'Cheraz, Minas', Հայկական

from Caucasian Armenia, Avedis Aharonyan[77] and Samson Harutyunyan,[78] would be included in the cabinet.[79] An editorial in *Ariamard* welcomed the rumours of the establishment of a 'United Armenia' with joy:

> [The State of] Armenia is henceforth declared. This time, we believe [it]. You, too, must believe it – the miserable remnants or deportees, with formidable persistence and brave resolve you had the will to continue to live – to live for tomorrow, for the free fatherland. Hence, you orphans, the rays of tomorrow; hence, the exiles; the first pilgrims. And hence, us, the lucky ones who want to lay the foundations of our Homeland.[80]

Zhoghovurt (The People) published the cabinet members' photos and welcomed the establishment of the cabinet (see Figure 1.2). 'Do we need to introduce one by one those members who are well known by our community because of their continuous public service? Is it necessary to introduce who Boghos Nubar, [Arshak] Chobanyan, [Avedis] Aharonyan and [Kapriel] Noradunkyan are?'[81] *Verchin Lur* indeed deemed it necessary and chose to publish the biographies of the newly

Հարց Հանրագիտարան (Haykakan Harts Hanragitaran) ['Minas Ch'eraz', The Encyclopaedia of the Armenian Question] (Yerevan: Haykakan Hanragitarani Glkhavor Khmbakrutyun, 1996), 372–3.

77 Avedis Aharonyan was born in Surmalu in 1866. He studied history and philosophy at the University of Lausanne. Following his graduation, he became the director of the Nersisian School in Tbilisi in 1907 but was imprisoned for two years because of his revolutionary activities. In 1917, he returned to Armenia and played an active role in the establishment of the Republic of Armenia. In 1919, he was head of the Armenian delegation at the Paris Peace Conference with Boghos Nubar. See 'Aharonyan, Avedis', Հայկական Հարց Հանրագիտարան (Haykakan Harts Hanragitaran) ['Avedis Aharonyan', The Encyclopaedia of the Armenian Question] (Yerevan: Haykakan Hanragitarani Glkhavor Khmbakrutyun, 1996), 26–7.

78 Samson Harutyunyan was a lawyer who was born and raised in Tbilisi. He was an active member of the Armenian community and served as president of the General Benevolent Union of Caucasus. He was known by the Armenian community as the 'Zohrab of the Caucasus'. See *Verchin Lur*, Հայկական Դահլիճը (Haygagan Tahlijě) [The Armenian Cabinet], 26 December 1918, no. 1454.

79 *Ariamard*, Միացեալ Հայաստանի Դահլիճը (Miatsyal Hayasdani Tahlijě) [The Cabinet of United Armenia], 21 December 1918, no. 27.

80 *Ariamard*, Հայաստանը Կազմելու Համար (Hayasdanĕ Gazmelu Hamar) [To Establish Armenia], 22 December 1918, no. 1843.

81 *Zhoghovurt*, Միացեալ Եւ Անկախ Հայաստան (Miatsyal Ew Angakh Hayasdan) [United and Independent Armenia], 22 December 1918, no. 60.

Figure 1.2 The cabinet members of 'United Armenia' (*Zhoghovurt*, 22 December 1918)
Courtesy of the National Library of Armenia

established Cabinet of United Armenia.[82] *Yerevan* published a map of 'United Armenia', which was, according to the paper, accepted in Paris during the peace conference. The paper was enthralled by the idea of a 'United Armenia', a dream that accelerated 'each Armenian's heartbeat, together with admiration and enthusiasm'.[83] The publication of these articles regarding the Cabinet of United Armenia illustrates the political shift of Ottoman Armenians; the Ottoman Parliament had lost its legitimacy in the eyes of Armenians and they now preferred to be represented in the Parliament of 'United Armenia'.

Besides editorials and columns in the Armenian press, there are ample reactions from individual Ottoman Armenians regarding the establishment of 'United Armenia'. As the news first broke, an ordinary Armenian, Karekin Hosrovyan, solicited contributions from Armenians to erect a statue of Georges Clemenceau, the prime minister of France, in Paris. Hosrovyan stated that it was a great opportunity to show the Armenians' gratitude towards the French nation. He concluded, 'At this critical moment when the future of Armenia will be

[82] *Verchin Lur*, Հայկական Դահլիճը (Haygagan Tahlijě) [The Armenian Cabinet], 26 December 1918, no. 1454.
[83] *Yerevan*, Մեծ Միացեալ Հայաստանը (Medz Miatsyal Hayasdaně) [Great United Armenia], 26 January 1919, no. 5.

discussed at the Paris conference, the president of the conference will be Clemenceau, which is a very good opportunity for us'.[84] *Verchin Lur* shared this sentiment, urging readers to contribute to the donation campaign. On that very day, the paper received donations from Armenian individuals: 100 *kuruş* (the smallest denomination of Ottoman currency) from Karekin Hosrovyan and 225 kuruş from Nishan Manukyan, Taniel Hovhannesyan, and Onnik Tavityan.[85]

Zhamanag dissected and countered the propagandist publications of Ottoman Turkish papers regarding the Wilsonian principles and the 'Turkishness' of the Anatolian provinces. According to the paper, the propagandising activities of the Vilayat-i Şarkiye Müdafa-i Hukuk Cemiyeti around self-determination, a telegram from the prominent Muslims of Adana – sent to the Allied Powers, claiming that Muslims constituted the majority population in the region – plus the publication of population statistics, all served to fan the flames of the idea of a Turkish/Muslim state. The editorial claimed that the Ottoman government had implemented a widely successful policy to convert the native Christian population to Islam, even going so far as to say the majority of the converted population were of Armenian origin.[86] *Verchin Lur*, furthermore, published a series to document in detail the Armenian characteristics of the Vilayât-ı Sitte to disprove the Ottoman Turkish press's allegations that they should not be considered as part of any Armenian state.[87]

The Ottoman government presented a report to the Allied officials in Istanbul to be forwarded to the Paris Conference, claiming that the Armenians, assisted by Tsarist forces, killed more than one million innocent Muslims before the start of the Armenian deportations in eastern Anatolia. The report argued that, in accordance with the

[84] *Verchin Lur*, Հայ Ժողովրդական Մասնակցութիւն Մ. Ժորժ Քլէմանսոյի Արձանին Համար (Hay Zhoghovrtagan Masnagtsutiwn M. Zhorzh Klemansoyi Artsanin Hamar) [The Participation of the Armenians for the Statue of George Clemenceau], 25 December 1918, no. 1453.

[85] Ibid. The average salary of a state official in 1918 was 900 kuruş per month. See Eldem, *Harp ve Mütareke Yıllarında Osmanlı İmparatorluğunun Ekonomisi*, 55.

[86] *Zhamanag*, Մեծամասնութեան Պատրանքը (Medzamasnutyan Badrankě) [The Illusion of Majority], 3 January 1919, no. 3404.

[87] *Verchin Lur*, Տառերն Անգամ Մեսրոպը Կը Յարուցանեն Քառերէն (Darern Ankam Mesrobě Gě Harutsanen Kareren) [Even the Letters Resuscitate Mesrop from the Rocks], 4 January 1919, no. 1462.

Wilsonian principles, it was not appropriate to establish an Armenian state in the eastern provinces of the Empire, since 'there were more than five million Muslims and only a few hundred thousand Armenians in the region'.[88] The Ottoman government proposed two alternative solutions to the problem: either Ottoman rule would continue in the eastern provinces, with the assurance that the rights of minorities would be preserved and upheld, or the borders of the Republic of Armenia would be extended to accommodate the Armenian refugees from the Syrian deserts and the eastern provinces.[89]

This report presented by the Ottoman government in Paris caused an immediate and intense backlash from Ottoman Armenian intellectuals. The official documents presented by the government were seen as 'falsified and a source of propaganda'. They argued that the documents of the Ottoman government consisted of biased, unreliable documents from CUP members and Russian military officers, whereas both the French and British military officers who witnessed the Armenian genocide had written memoirs, American Ambassador Morgenthau had published a book on the massacres, and the British government's Blue Book provided documents.[90]

The Armenian papers – be they liberal, such as *Verchin Lur* and *Zhoghovurt*, or nationalist, such as *Ariamard* – reflected the enthusiasm and mobilisation of the Armenian community. These views and sentiments were expressed not only by Armenian intellectuals but also by the common folk, who saw the establishment of an Armenian state as liberation from the Ottoman state. As the ethnic bargaining theory

[88] *Vakit*, 'Ermeni Vakaı Bir Milyon İslam' [The Armenian Incident and One Million Muslims], 21 February 1919, no. 489.

[89] *Zhoghovurti Tsaynĕ*, Թուրք Կառավարութեան Ծանուցագիրը Խաղաղութեան Համաժողովին (Turk Garavarutyan Dzanutsakirĕ Khaghaghutyan Hamazhoghovin) [The Statement of Turkish Government at the Peace Conference], 4 March 1919, no. 38–118.

[90] *Zhamanag*, Հայերը Եւ Թուրք Մտաւորականութիւնը (Hayerĕ Ew Turk Mdavoraganutiwnĕ) [Armenians and the Turkish Intelligentsia], 4 March 1919, no. 3460. For ambassador Morgenthau's memoirs and the British government's documents, see Henry Morgenthau, *Ambassador Morgenthau's Story* (New York: Doubleday, Page & Co., 1918); Viscount Bryce, Arnold Toynbee, and Ara Sarafian, *The Treatment of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire, 1915–16: Documents Presented to Viscount Grey of Fallodon by Viscount Bryce: Uncensored Edition* (Princeton, NJ: Gomidas Institute, 2005). The Blue Book includes accounts from United States missionary sources and testimonies of German, Danish, Swedish, Greek, and Armenian witnesses regarding the genocide.

argues, the pro-independence position of the Armenian community increased significantly when the Allied states signalled their support.[91] The external support shown by the Allies increased the radicalisation of the Armenian community.[92] This position held until the majority of Ottoman Armenians realigned their political orientation following the defeat of the Greeks by Turkish Nationalists and the signing of the Lausanne Treaty in 1923.

Ottoman Armenians' Aspirations for a 'United Armenia'

In an interview, Boghos Nubar, one of the most influential Armenian political figures of the Armistice period, underlined that 'United Armenia' would be created through the unification of the Armenian population in the Caucasus, Ottoman Armenian survivors scattered across the Ottoman lands, and the diaspora. With the assistance of the United States, Britain, and/or France, he claimed 'United Armenia' would establish its governmental bodies and become a robust state within twenty years. With the repatriation of the diasporic Ottoman Armenians together with the two million Caucasian Armenians, he stated that 'United Armenia' would contain a population of more than three million Armenians.[93]

[91] Jenne, *Ethnic Bargaining*, 53; Erin K. Jenne, 'A Bargaining Theory of Minority Demands: Explaining the Dog That Did Not Bite in 1990s Yugoslavia', *International Studies Quarterly* 48(4) (2004); Erin K. Jenne, Stephen M. Saideman, and Will Lowe, 'Separatism As a Bargaining Posture: The Role of Leverage in Minority Radicalization', *Journal of Peace Research* 44(5) (2007).

[92] The case of Ottoman Armenians bears similarities with the case of the Sudeten Germans, who were a minority in the Czechoslovak state. In 1918, leaders of the Sudeten Germans were mobilised towards independence by the signals given by Germany and Austria, the supportive states. Prominent leaders of the Sudeten Germans such as Joseph Seliger and Rudolf Lodgman voiced their demands for independence in 1918 and 1919. This led to a conflict between the Czech authorities and Sudeten German leadership. The Sudetens refused to participate in parliamentary discussions and did not vote for crucial legislation regarding minorities, economy, education, and land reform. The Czech authorities accepted Czech and Slovak as the official languages and, under the new law, all government correspondence and business transactions were to be conducted in Czech and Slovak. Thus, the Sudeten Germans were under pressure because of their pro-independence political position. However, when Germany and Austria renounced their territorial claims on Czechoslovakia in 1919 after the Paris Peace Conference, the Sudeten Germans were left with no option but to accept and accommodate the Czechoslovak state (Jenne, *Ethnic Bargaining*, 64).

[93] *Zhoghovurti Artsakank*, Նոր Հայաստան (Nor Hayasdan) [New Armenia], 19 January 1919, no. 19–78.

Boghos Nubar was a highly respected community leader and an activist who devoted himself to the cause of establishing an Armenian state in the Vilayât-ı Sitte. With the high regard he was afforded in Europe, Boghos Nubar was in the best position to advocate for the national rights of the Armenians before the Great Powers. For the Armenian community, supporting Boghos Nubar meant supporting complete independence from the Ottoman state. Ottoman Armenians not only expressed their support for Boghos Nubar but they even celebrated a day in honour of him – 9 January was commemorated as the Feast of Boghos Nubar, to show their gratitude and respect to 'the leader of the nation seeking the independence of United Armenia'. Bishop Mesrop Naroyan declared that Boghos Nubar was the 'Great Armenian' who devoted himself to the Armenian nation. Vahan Toshikyan concluded his article as follows: 'It is the feast of the Armenian [George] Washington today. Come, let us make a toast for him … Come, our Greek brothers, yet another cup with you! It is the feast of the Armenian Venizelos today!'[94]

The increasing support Boghos Nubar received from the various strata of the Armenian community – including intellectuals, community leaders, and common folk with no political affiliations – is indicative of the gradual shift of the community's political position and the wider mobilisation around the idea of independence. According to the ethnic bargaining theory, 'if minority members are reasonably confident of external support, their leaders will radicalise for concessions despite the majority's best attempts to appease them'.[95] In the case of Ottoman Armenians, despite the Ottoman regime's hostility, it was understandable that the leadership was mobilised because they were reasonably confident of external support. Boghos Nubar maintained close relations with the French and British authorities during the war, and he was the main political figure who organised the Légion d'Orient volunteer battalions within the Allied troops, which fought on the battlefields in Syria and Palestine against the Ottoman troops and helped the French and British to advance. Boghos Nubar subsequently became a widely popular figure in 1919 because of these prior involvements, which satisfied the new radicalism of the Armenian community.

[94] *Nor Gyank*, Եկէ՛ք Պարպո՛ւենք Բաժակնիս (Yegek Barbenk Pazhagnis) [Come, Let's Empty Our Glasses], 9 January 1919, no. 83.

[95] Jenne, *Ethnic Bargaining*, 53.

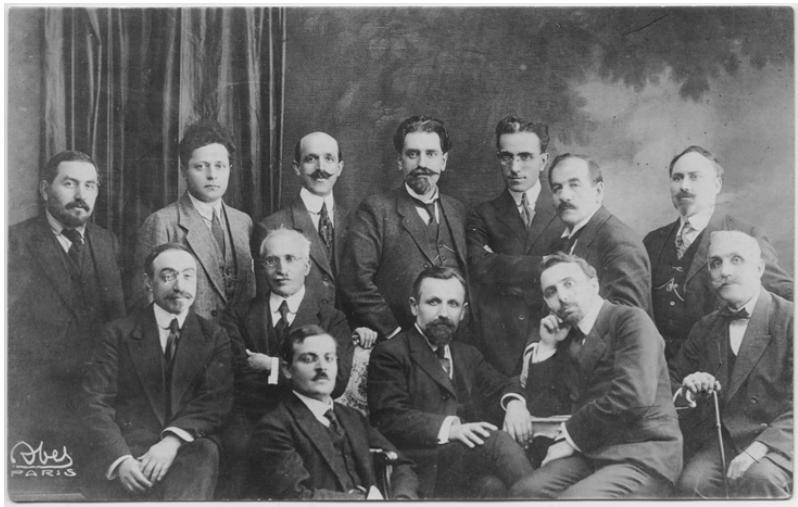


Figure 1.3 ARF members of the National Assembly
Project SAVE Armenian Photograph Archives courtesy of Vart Shirvanian Hachigian

The Armenian Patriotic Unions, which were organised by ten Armenian associations, provide crucial clues as to how Ottoman Armenians living in the provinces or as refugees outside of Ottoman territories perceived the developments within the Armenian press and political circles regarding the 'United Armenia' project. The meeting of the Armenian Patriotic Unions was held in Istanbul with the participation of representatives of the ten associations, as well as representatives of Ottoman Armenian refugees in the Caucasus, Vahan Papazyan, and Avedis Terzibashyan.[96] At the

[96] *Jagadamard*, Հայրենակցական Միութիւններու Երէկուան Ժողովը (Hayrenagtsagan Miutiwnneru Ereguan Zhoghově) [The Meeting of Patriotic Unions Held Yesterday], 25 January 1919, no. 61. Vahan Papazyan was born in Tabriz in 1876 to parents who were originally from Van. He moved to Van in 1903 and became involved in politics. As a member of the ARF, he was elected to the Ottoman Parliament in 1908. During the deportations, he joined the Armenian self-defence units and he later escaped to the Caucasus. He tried to organise the Ottoman Armenian refugee community in the Caucasus, who numbered more than 400,000. He moved to Beirut in 1947, where he died in 1973. He was also known by his pseudonym, Goms. See 'Goms (Papazyan Vahan)', Հայկական Հարց Հանրագիտարան (Haykakan Harts Hanragitaran) [The Encyclopaedia of the Armenian Question] (Yerevan: Haykakan Hanragitarani Glkhavor

end of the meeting, the Patriotic Unions jointly made an announcement to publicise their demands. First, they demanded compensation for the Armenians' loss during wartime and the punishment of the perpetrators.[97] Secondly, they asked for the establishment of a national loan scheme to aid the return of Armenian refugees to their villages, to build new houses, and to provide equipment for agricultural activity. Thirdly, they demanded the discharge of the Armenian soldiers who were conscripted into the Ottoman military. The Patriotic Unions declared that they were ready to co-operate to secure international recognition of the 'Independent and United Armenia' (see Map 1.3).[98] One of the Armenian Patriotic Unions was the Union of Hayk, which was established to defend the rights of Armenians in the six provinces. This coincided with the Vilayat-i Şarkiye Müdafa-i Hukuk Cemiyeti (Society for the National Defence of the Rights of the Eastern Provinces), established in eastern Anatolia to protect the rights of Ottoman Muslims, based on the Wilsonian principles. The Union of Hayk deputies were elected from Garin (Erzurum), Papert (Bayburt), Erznga (Erzincan), Khnus (Hınıs), Dayk (the modern-day Turkish districts of Artvin, Oltu, and İspir), and Kighě (Kiğı).[99]

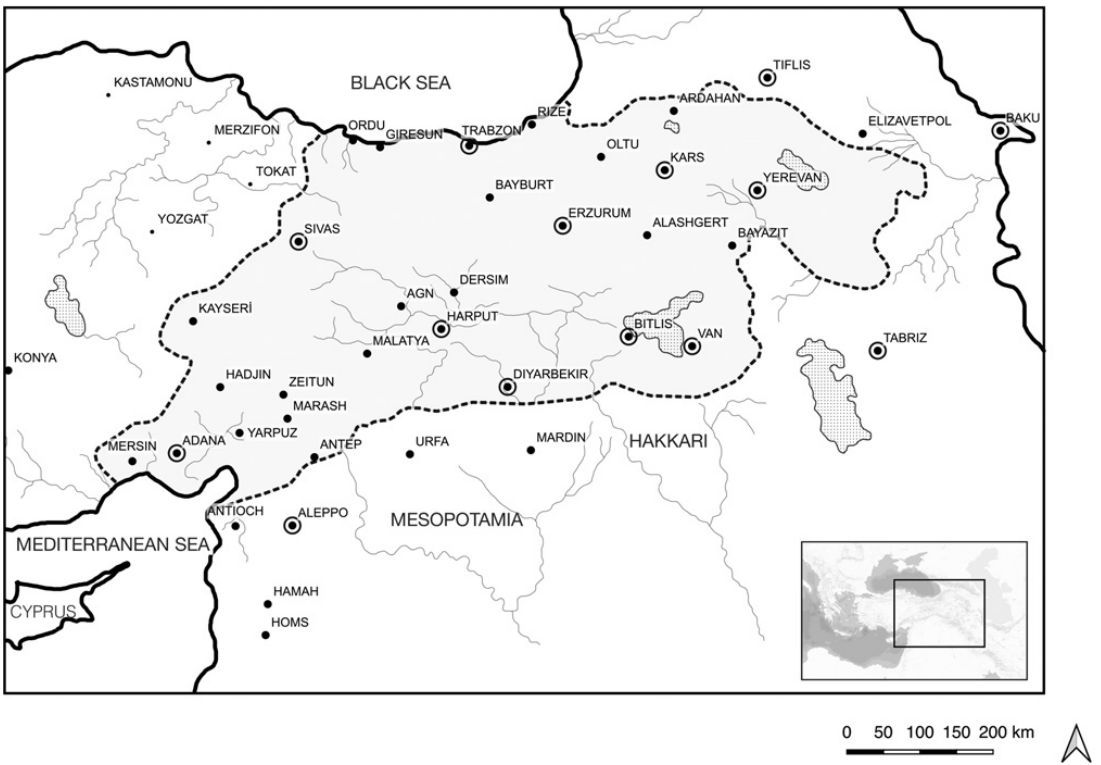
The denominational differences within the Ottoman Armenian community began to erode. Surrounded by social, economic, and political crises, the different groups of the Armenian community came together to organise an aid campaign for Armenian refugees and form a united front. According to the *Yerevan* paper from Istanbul, Armenians should seek unity between religious denominations, calling upon

Khmbakrutiwn, 1996), 188. Avedis Terzibashyan was born in 1873 in Van. He attended the Armenian Hisusyan and Yeramyan schools. After the Revolution of 1908, he was elected as mayor of Van. In 1915, he participated in the self-defence activities of the Van Armenians against the Ottoman forces. He escaped to the Caucasus following the retreat of the Russian army. During the Armistice years, he moved to Istanbul. Following the announcement of the Republic of Turkey, he moved to Paris, where he died in 1942. See 'Terzibashyan Avedis', Հայկական Հարց Հանրագիտարան (Haykakan Harts Hanragitaran) [The Encyclopaedia of the Armenian Question] (Yerevan: Haykakan Hanragitarani Glkhavor Khmbakrutiwn, 1996), 139.

97 *Jagadamard*, Հայրենակցական Միութիւններու Երէկուան Ժողովը (Hayrenagtsagan Miutiwnneru Ereguan Zhoghově) [The Meeting of Patriotic Unions Held Yesterday], 25 January 1919, no. 61.

98 Ibid.

99 *Jagadamard*, Բարձր Հայկի Միութիւն (Partsr Haygi Miutiwn) [The Union of Hayk], 19 January 1919, no. 55.



Map 1.3 Approximate borders of imagined 'United Armenia' based on newspaper publications

Armenian religious leaders to act urgently to resolve the disagreements and create harmony within the greater community: 'If, God forbid, we fail to unite and to serve our fatherland, why then this much blood, pain and suffering? Unity! Unity! Unity! . . . and to work ahead!'[100]

The establishment of the Union of Hayk was key to the mobilisation of the entire community. The launch of the Union was preceded by the organisation of donations campaigns for the Armenian state and the publication of articles encouraging the community to join the growing movement towards national liberation. Indeed, these processes led to the gradual political radicalisation of Ottoman Armenians, which is similar to a pattern seen in Europe when other ethnic groups established such organisations to mobilise the masses during the 1920s and 1930s. The Association of the German Racial Groups in Europe, the Warsaw Congress of Poles Living Abroad, and the pan-Russian Congress in Riga are a few examples of how non-dominant ethnic groups could be mobilised against host states.[101] Two components are critical to radicalisation: internal and external leverage.[102] In the case of Ottoman Armenians, the de facto Allied occupation was the external leverage. The CUP government's fall and the campaign for the six provinces were the internal leverage. The mobilisation and radicalisation of the Ottoman Armenian community became possible as both internal and external leverage became available to be exploited. The ethnic bargaining theory suggests that 'minority radicalisation is influenced by internal bargaining leverage in the first place, which is largely a function of group size and territorial concentration'.[103] However, absent in the case of Ottoman Armenians was the territorial concentration, which had been lost due to the genocide. The Ottoman Armenian leadership manufactured a unique and strategic claim to territory by using pre-war population statistics as evidence to demonstrate that Armenians had been a majority in the Vilayât-ı Sitte, which would be restored through the relocation of Armenians from Syria to the region.

In response to the collective wish of the Ottoman Armenian community, the Armenian Catholic, Protestant, and Apostolic Patriarchates

[100] *Yerevan*, Թէ Ինչ Հիմերու Վրայ Կազմուելու է Հայկական Հանրապետութիւնը (Te Inch Himeru Vray Gazmuelu e Haygagan Hanrabedutiwně) [On What Grounds the Armenian State Will Be Established?], 26 January 1919, no. 5.

[101] Jenne, *Ethnic Bargaining*, 23. [102] Ibid., 51. [103] Ibid., 56.

issued a joint statement to announce that the churches had united to co-ordinate their relief activities in this critical period when thousands of Armenians were struggling to survive in the provinces. There was an urgent need for more than one million liras in order to meet the refugees' basic needs. It is significant that the joint statement of the Armenian religious authorities called upon the masses to aid the Armenian refugees, who were labelled as 'the founding bodies of the fatherland'.[104]

> The precious fragments of the horrible calamity, the affectionate remnants of the Armenian nation, who will be the founding columns of our fatherland, are about to lose the struggle against death … Therefore, action is needed without delay, to save our dear ones from the claws of death … From ancient times, at the time of danger, discouragement and pretentiousness have been our characteristics; from now onward each individual should try to surpass his friend with the joy of winning an honest competition of a holy duty.[105]

Zhoghovurti Tsaynĕ (The Voice of the People) organised a donation campaign to raise funds for the Republic of Armenia in the Caucasus. The main aim was to assist Armenian refugees, with the secondary aim of establishing fraternity between the two branches of the Armenians. The editor explained the significance of the effort in the conclusion of the lead article: 'This donation campaign clearly proved Ottoman Armenians' political position by supporting their compatriots in the Caucasus'.[106] The Armenian community in Izmir similarly organised a donation campaign to send aid to the Republic of Armenia in the Caucasus. The campaign created heated debates within the community because the collected amount fell far short of the initial goal. Around 40,000 Ottoman liras were donated, whereas the target amount was more than 200,000 Ottoman liras. The religious leader of Izmir's Armenian community, Bishop Madteos, was disappointed with the result of the donation campaign and even resigned, feeling that he himself had failed. In particular, the upper

[104] *Jagadamard*, Երեք Հոգեւոր Պետերուն Կոչը Հայ Ժողովուրդին (Erek Hokevor Bederun Gochĕ Hay Zhoghovurtin) [The Call of the Three Religious Leaders to the Armenian Nation], 13 April 1919, no. 129.

[105] Ibid.

[106] *Zhoghovurti Tsaynĕ*, Փրկենք Հայ Անկախութեան Ռահվիրաները (Prgenk Hay Angakhutyan Rahviranerĕ) [Let's Save the Pioneers of Armenian Independence], 12 February 1919, no. 22–101.

class of Izmir Armenians was criticised for being indifferent towards the campaign, donating only small amounts, ranging from 1,000 to 2,000 Ottoman liras. In a public speech, Bishop Madteos castigated the Izmir elite:

> You are all informed who has donated how much, so I do not feel the miserable need of mentioning names one by one … May their conscience be their judge. But if those who donated 3,000, 2,000 and 1,000 liras feel comfortable and lull their conscience, I could not lull my conscience, unfortunately; I feel ashamed before the entirety of humanity.[107]

Indeed, the prospect of famine was grave in the Republic of Armenia. According to reports, there were more than 500,000 Ottoman Armenian refugees in the Republic of Armenia, as well as 50,000 in the north Caucasus, living in poverty and danger of famine.[108] Even in the capital, Yerevan, approximately 150 people died each day from hunger and typhus, and in the second largest city, Gyumri, the rate was 100 people per day. In total, around 1,000 people died each day within the borders of Armenia.[109] Reports stated that there were not enough doctors, there was a shortage of medicine, and people were reduced to collecting dead animals in the streets for food. Georgia and Azerbaijan closed their borders, making it even more challenging to deliver aid. The situation was so severe that H. Manugyan, an Armenian correspondent, wrote in his report that Caucasian Armenians were waiting and dying before the gates of the cemetery; instead of an 'Independent and United Armenia', the Armenians would see 'an independent and mass cemetery'.[110] In another report, it was underlined that 3,000 people were dying of hunger and disease per day in Armenia. Because the government had no money, the only food that was distributed to the people was free meat, rice, and water.[111]

[107] *Tashink*, Գաւառական Ժողով Պատմական Նիստ (Kavaragan Zhoghov Badmagan Nisd) [Provincial Assembly – A Historic Session], 9 May 1919, no. 1936.

[108] *Jagadamard*, Իսկական Աղետ Մը Պիտի Ըլլայ Եթէ … ('Isgagan Aghed Mĕ Bidi Ĕlla Ete … ') [It Will Be a Real Disaster if …], 22 January 1919, no. 57.

[109] Ibid.

[110] *Jagadamard*, Հոգեվարքի Հռնդիւններ ('Hokevarki Hrntiwnner') [Snoring Agony], 18 February 1919, no. 84.

[111] *Alemdar*, 'Ermenistan'da Kaht u Gala' [Famine and Poverty in Armenia], 22 March 1919, no. 91.

The Arrival of Patriarch Zaven and the Celebrations of Vartanants

The Ottoman Armenian community's striving towards independence intensified with a series of events and demonstrations, starting with Armenian Patriarch Zaven's return from exile and the celebrations of the Vartanants Feast, both of which reflected the collective change in Ottoman Armenians' socio-political position and how the community's sentiments transitioned from Ottomanism to Armenian nationalism.[112]

Patriarch Zaven, who had been exiled to Baghdad in 1916 by order of the CUP government, returned to Istanbul around midnight on 19 February 1919 on the transport ship *Akasya* and spent the night inside the vessel, despite invitations from the Patriarchate's officers.[113] He disembarked the following morning and was welcomed by a large group of Armenian clergymen, officers, school children, and businessmen, as well as the Entente's officers. The group moved from Karaköy,

[112] The Vartanants Feast is commemorated by the Armenian Church each year on the Thursday preceding Great Lent. It celebrates the resistance of Vartan Mamigonyan against the Persian army at the Battle of Avarayr in 451, which ultimately secured the Armenians' right to practise Christianity. The Vartanants Feast has both a religious and a nationalistic character, as Vartan Mamigonyan's struggle was for protecting both the Christian faith and the Armenian community itself.

[113] *Vakit*, 'Ermeni Patriği' [The Armenian Patriarch], 20 February 1919, no. 478; Tuğlacı, *Tarih Boyunca Batı Ermenileri*, 749. Zaven Der Yeghiayan was born in 1868 in Mosul. After receiving his primary education in Baghdad, he moved to Armash (Akmeşe, Izmit). He graduated from the Armash Theological Seminary in 1895 and served as a bishop in Erzurum in 1898 and Van in 1908. He was the prelate for Diyarbakir from 1910 to 1913. In 1913, he became the Armenian Patriarch of Istanbul. In 1916, the CUP government issued a regulation ordering the closure of the Armenian Patriarchate in Istanbul and the exile of Patriarch Zaven to Baghdad. Patriarch Zaven spent the wartime in Baghdad and, after the signing of the Armistice, he returned to Istanbul in February 1919. He actively worked to defend the rights of the Armenians before the Allied Powers and lobbied for Armenian independence; however, following the Nationalists' victory, he left his position in 1922 and moved to Bulgaria. He died in Baghdad in 1947. For his biography, see Zaven Der Yeghiayan, *My Patriarchal Memoirs* (Barrington, RI: Mayreni, 2002). For the regulation of the CUP government issued in 1916, see *Tanin*, 'Ermeni Patrikhanesi' [The Armenian Patriarchate], 11 August 1916, no. 2752; *Tanin*, 'Ermeni Patrikhanesi' [The Armenian Patriarchate], 15 August 1916, no. 2756; Ali Güler, 'Ermenilerle İlgili 1916 ve 1918 Yıllarında Yapılan Hukuki Düzenlemeler' [Legal Arrangements about the Armenians between 1916 and 1918], *Ankara Üniversitesi Osmanlı Tarihi Araştırma ve Uygulama Merkezi Dergisi* 6 (1995), 91–137.

passing over the Galata bridge, through Sirkeci, the Governorship of Istanbul, and the Bab-ı Ali area, intermittently waving the Armenian flag and shouting slogans. This demonstration of Istanbul Armenians astounded not only Muslims but also Allied Powers officers, who were puzzled by the enthusiasm of the Armenians.[114] Even though the Armenian Patriarchate's staff had informed the Ottoman police officers of the welcome ceremony, the police administration was concerned with the complaints received after the event from Turkish individuals and chose to initiate legal proceedings against the organisers of this public event, including Dr Torkomyan[115] and others.[116]

The Ottoman Armenians' political views were made visible in the celebrations of the Vartanants Feast. On 19 February, with the Allied authorities' permission, the Armenian community, in honour of the Vartanants Feast, was allowed to hang the Armenian flag in front of the St Stepannos Armenian Church in Izmir. The Allied officials urged the Armenians not to hang the Armenian flag outside of Izmir, as it might elicit an uninvited response from local Turks.[117] Furthermore, in Konya, the Vartanants Feast was celebrated at the American orphanage. Posters of Vartan Mamigonyan, as well as both Armenian and American flags, were hung in the hall. The Armenian orphans sang patriotic songs, and the former president of the

[114] Ramazan Erhan Güllü, *Ermeni Sorunu ve Istanbul Ermeni Patrikhanesi (1878–1923)* [The Armenian Question and the Armenian Patriarchate of Istanbul] (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2015), 502.

[115] Vahram Torkomyan was born in Istanbul in 1858, educated in France, and became a physician in 1884. After his graduation, he returned to Istanbul and became active in community life. His articles on Armenian medical history were published in the *Hantes Amsoria* journal in Vienna. During the Armenian genocide, Vahram Torkomyan was arrested in April 1915 and sent to Çankırı. He was pardoned in May and safely returned to Istanbul. He continued his active participation in Armenian political and cultural life and served as the physician of Patriarch Zaven in Istanbul until 1922. After the victory of the Nationalist forces, he moved to France, where he died in 1942. See Sdepanyan Garnik, 'Vahram Torkomyan', Կենսագրական Բառարան (Kensagrakan Bararan) [Biographical Dictionary] (Yerevan: Hayasdan, 1973), 371–2.

[116] *Eski Gün*, 'Patrik Zaven Efendi'nin Muvassalatı' [The Arrival of Patriarch Zaven], 21 February 1919, no. 30; *Yeni Gün*, 'Ermeni Patriğine Yapılan Numayişler Hakkında' [About the Demonstrations Made for the Armenian Patriarch], 24 February 1919, no. 172; Zeki Sarıhan, *Kurtuluş Savaşı Günlüğü* [The Diary of War of Independence] (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1995), 136–7.

[117] *Zhamanag*, Հայկական Դրոշը Իզմիրի Մէջ (Haygagan Troshě Izmiri Mech) [The Armenian Flag in Izmir], 26 February 1919, no. 3455.

Figure 1.4 Armenian political and civic mission to the USA
Project SAVE Armenian Photograph Archives courtesy of Vahe Boyajian

Armenian school in Kastamonu, Garabet Efendi Ucbeyan, and B. Moskofyan from Kayseri gave speeches on the significance of the feast and how it symbolised the goal of Armenian independence.[118] On 28 February, more than 800 native Armenians from Afyon gathered in the hall of the Armenian school to celebrate the Vartanants Feast. British military officers were present at the gathering. A woman representing the Armenian community gave a speech in English emphasising the meaning of Vartanants, and Mr. Yerezyan, a prominent member of the community, urged the crowd to migrate to 'United Armenia', start learning Armenian, and then speak Armenian in public places. After singing patriotic songs and selling hundreds of Armenian flags, the gathering came to an end with the playing of the British national anthem and chants of 'Long live

[118] *Zhoghovurti Tsaynĕ*, Վարդանանց Տօնը Գոնիայի Ամերիկեան Որբանոցին Մէջ (Vartanants Donĕ Koniayi Amerigyan Orpanotsin Mech) [The Vartanants' Feast at Konya American Orphanage], 10 March 1919, no. 44–124.

Armenia, long live Boghos Nubar, long live the British Empire!'[119] Notably, when the religious leader of the region, Ardavazt Surmeyan, visited Eskişehir to celebrate the Sunday Mass, he preached that the Armenians should migrate to 'United Armenia' when the time arrived. He concluded: 'if you have a nail to use, save it for our Fatherland'.[120]

Armenians in Eskişehir organised an evening party on 22 March 1919 at the Armenian girls' school for the benefit of the Armenian education organisations in the city. Armenian children, families, and all the prominent members of the community attended the fete, as well as British military officers who were visiting the city at the time. The hall was decorated with posters of Boghos Nubar and the leaders of the Allied governments, with a large Armenian flag prominently on display. The Ottoman police forces removed the posters before the start of the evening, yet the British military officers immediately intervened to hang them up again. Patriotic Armenian songs were sung and prayers were offered for the independence of 'United Armenia'.[121]

Such excitement was seen not only in Istanbul and the provinces of Anatolia but also within the Armenian diaspora; declarations from the diasporic communities were sent, reiterating the call to repatriate. It was necessary to take steps to mobilise the diasporic Armenian communities in order to ease their repatriation process. The organisation of the diasporic communities was seen as a harbinger of the new Armenian state. The joint statement of the diasporic communities concluded that the Armenian state would be established by Armenian citizens who would return from all corners of the earth and who represented 'a multicolour harmony, a panorama of civilisation'.[122]

The National Assembly of the Ottoman Armenians, together with the Armenian Patriarchate and the Armenian Catholic and Protestant leaders, gathered at the Armenian National Assembly to discuss political developments. During the meeting, the Armenian Catholic and Protestant leaders endorsed the Armenian Patriarchate, stating that during the war Armenians from all denominations were massacred

[119] Ibid.

[120] Ibid. On 19 February 1920, *Zhamanag* published photos of Vartan Mamigonyan and General Antranik, as well as poetry.

[121] *Jagadamard*, Շարժումը Էսկիշէհիրի Մէջ (Zharzhumĕ Esgishehiri Mech) [The Movement in Eskişehir], 26 March 1919, no. 113.

[122] *Jagadamard*, Գաղութները Կողջունեն Ազատ Հայրենիքը (Kaghutnerĕ Goghchunen Azad Hayrenikĕ) [Communities Salute the Independent Armenia], 4 May 1919, no. 146.

and that it was time to unite the political aspirations of Ottoman Armenians under one umbrella. At the end of the meeting, upon a suggestion by Sarkis Srents, an Armenian intellectual, the Ottoman Armenians decided to send a letter to the Armenian Republic in the Caucasus to offer their 'sincere gratitude' to the government and to thank them for their support for the Ottoman Armenian refugees in the Caucasus. The meeting also decided to send a similar letter to the president of the Armenian delegation in Paris, Boghos Nubar, for his 'assiduous' work in the establishment of 'United Armenia'.[123]

Young Ottoman Armenians were among the supporters of the 'United Armenia' ideal. An Armenian student studying philosophy, Z. Surenyan, wrote an article for *Verchin Lur* stressing the importance of the repatriation movement and calling for Armenian communities to return to the eastern provinces:

> For the ultimate solution of our case, as I mentioned above, we need to be in our land as much as possible. This is a necessity that each and every Armenian can understand instinctively ... Today we need to return to our fatherland, to cling to our land inextricably, to show the civilised world that we are totally not the same as Jews, whose majority are divided into different parts of the world and are reluctant to relocate to Palestine, despite the huge efforts of Jewish nationalists and noble Zionists.[124]

These are critical indications that Ottoman Armenians relinquished the possibility of remaining part of the Ottoman state after the signing of the Armistice of Mudros. The Wilsonian principles became a guiding light for the Armenians, knowing that the right of self-determination would bring the independence of their historic fatherland. The policy makers, the Armenian press, and the Patriarchate knew that the Armenians were in the numerical 'minority' in the six provinces, yet they believed that the Armenians' contributions to the Allied victory would be repaid in assistance to secure their independence. To achieve this aim, Ottoman Armenians, citing the Wilsonian principles, strategised that Ottoman Armenians' unification with their compatriots in

[123] *Zhamanag*, Սգահանդէս Եւ Շնորհաւորական Հէռագիրներ (Skahantes Ew Shnorhavoragan Herakirner) [Ceremony and Congratulatory Telegrams], 22 March 1919, no. 3476; Armenian Revolutionary Federation, Միացեալ Եւ Անկախ Հայաստան (Miatsyal Ew Angakh Hayasdan) [United and Independent Armenia] (Istanbul: O. Arzuman, 1919), 69.

[124] *Verchin Lur*, Դէպի Հայաստան (Tebi Hayasdan) [To Armenia], 16 May 1919, no. 1572.

the Caucasus would make the Armenian population a majority in the proposed Armenian state. Therefore, the Republic of Armenia established in the Caucasus was seen as the nucleus of 'United Armenia'. As such, the Ottoman Armenian community organised donation campaigns for the Armenian refugees in the Caucasus and celebrated the anniversary of the Republic of Armenia in the Armenian press in Istanbul. They considered this support of the Armenian refugees and the state in the Caucasus as an investment in a future 'United Armenia' state.

In an interview Patriarch Zaven gave to *Alemdar* (The Flag-Bearer), speaking about the repatriation of the Armenian refugees to the new Armenian state and the potential obstacle of Kurdish claims to sovereignty in the region, he maintained that Armenians were capable of restoring welfare and security without Allied assistance, as they had a regular army consisting of 30,000 soldiers and an additional volunteer corps of 20,000 men. Further, the Patriarch stated that Erzurum would be the capital of the 'United Armenia' state, given its central location and the role it had played in Armenian history as a cultural, religious, and social centre.[125]

As can be seen from the activities of the community leadership and members, Ottoman Armenians were relying upon the goodwill of the Great Powers, particularly the British and the French, at a time when the CUP underground organisations were already preparing a resistance movement in Anatolia against the Allied occupation and the Bolsheviks were gaining momentum against the White Russian troops and moving towards the Caucasus. Both the Bolsheviks and the Turkish National Movement were real obstacles to the quest for Armenian independence, and the possibility of Allied support for Armenians in a geography surrounded by Turkish Nationalists and Bolsheviks was not likely. For example, at the beginning of 1920, the British promised to send weapons, ammunition, and military equipment to the Republic of Armenia but the shipment was delayed for more than six months due to concerns that the weapons would end up in the hands of Bolsheviks or Turkish Nationalists.[126] While Armenians were making over-ambitious

[125] *Alemdar*, 'Ermeni Patriğinin Beyanı' [The Statements of Armenian Patriarch], 12 April 1919, no. 111.

[126] Richard G. Hovannisian, 'The Republic of Armenia', in *The Armenian People From Ancient to Modern Times, Volume II: Foreign Dominion to Statehood: The Fifteenth Century to the Twentieth Century*, Richard G. Hovannisian, ed. (London: Macmillan Press, 1997), 331.

claims for a United Armenian state stretching from Elizavetpol to Cilicia and Sinop to Urmia, the Allied Powers argued that the Republic of Armenia should extend only to the three eastern provinces of Van, Bitlis, and Erzurum, with a small outlet on the Black Sea.[127]

Conclusion

It is crucial to underscore these indicators which reflect the transformation of the Armenian political position. Firstly, when rumours of the signing of the Armistice of Mudros first spread through the community, thousands of Armenians rushed to the streets and greeted each other, crying, 'Christ is risen!' This celebration was the beginning of a new chapter in the history of Ottoman Armenians, which would continue until the Greek army's defeat in Anatolia by the Turkish Nationalists in 1922. The publishing of population statistics on Ottoman Armenians in the Armenian papers can be considered a second indicator. The primary aim of publishing the population statistics was to demonstrate the 'Armenianness' of the Vilayât-ı Sitte, which supposedly evidenced the pro-independence approach of the Ottoman Armenian community. Based on the Wilsonian principles, the Ottoman Armenian press promoted the right to independence of Ottoman Armenians, arguing that the majority of the population in the six provinces was of Armenian origin. Yet, this was a rather ineffective claim, since the Armenian deportation and genocide in 1915 had significantly reduced the size of the population; even the transfer of survivors to the region would not have constituted a numerical majority of Armenians. The donation campaigns organised by the Armenian societies that were established in various districts of Istanbul can be considered a third indicator of the transformation of the Armenian political position, as they demonstrated the community's support for the Republic of Armenia, which was seen as the nucleus of the 'United Armenia'.

The majority of the Armenian community in the Ottoman Empire, regardless of political orientation, expressed their ardent support for Armenian independence after the fall of the CUP government and the signing of the Armistice of Mudros. The Armenian papers published hundreds of articles advocating the establishment of an independent and united Armenia in the eastern provinces. Majority repression had

[127] Ibid., 332.

begun during the war by the CUP government when it declared that the Armenian population was to be deported. This subjugation continued during the Armistice years through the activities of the Turkish National Movement. However, outside support became apparent after the occupation of Ottoman lands by the Allied Powers and the establishment of the Armenian state in the Caucasus. This moment of Ottoman Armenian radicalisation, encouraged by outside support, would soon give way to accommodation and acceptance of the Kemalist regime after the ultimate victory of Nationalist forces in Anatolia in 1922.

2 *The Emergence of the Turkish National Movement in Anatolia and the Armenian Community*

The approach of our neighbours toward us has changed dramatically. Here, almost every day they organise meetings . . .. [Censored]. Almost all of the shops of Armenians stayed closed last Friday. It was a day of horror and fear. Each day that we pass is a gift . . . [Censored] I cannot explain with words. Our life is discouraging here and if we do not receive any help we will be in a position of total annihilation. They think that 'Because we died, our enemies should also be annihilated'. It is better for us to creep, to starve and to do portage in the streets of Istanbul rather than be killed here.[1]

An Armenian from Tokat wrote these sentences in their letter, which was sent to *Jagadamard* in July 1919. The author expressed the fear and insecurity that prevailed in Anatolia's inner cities and Armenians' collective psychology. They begged the authorities in Istanbul for help to relocate there. The conditions of Armenians in certain parts of Anatolia were so miserable that locals reported their unfortunate

* A version of this chapter has been published as Ari Şekeryan, 'Reactions of the Armenian Community to the Emergence of the Turkish National Movement (1919–20)', *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association* 4(2) (2017), 381–401.

1 *Jagadamard*, Ահ ու Սարսափ Եւդոկիոյ Մէջ (Ah U Sarsap Evtogioy Mech) [Horror in Tokat], 30 July 1919, no. 219. During World War I, censorship of the Ottoman press was overseen by the Matbuat Müdürlüğü (Press Bureau), which was controlled by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. After the signing of the Armistice of Mudros and the occupation of Istanbul, the Allied authorities organised joint censorship commissions together with the governmental officials to censor publications. On 10 February 1919, the Sansür Kararnamesi (Censorship Enactment) was issued. According to this decree, each issue of a daily required official approval from the censorship commissions before it went to press. *Zhamanag* argued that this censorship was proof of an alliance between the Istanbul and Ankara governments and asked, 'In a country which is not at war, what is the meaning of censorship of the mail?' See *Zhamanag*, 15 October 1919, no. 3649. For general information on censorship during the Armistice years, see Ender Korkmaz, 'Mondros Mütarekesi Döneminde Sansür' [Censorship during the Period of Armistice of Mudros], *Yakın Dönem Türkiye Araştırmaları*, 19–20 (2011).

situation to the Armenian papers. The Armenian papers were full of such reports asking for help from the authorities in Istanbul. This chapter will focus on the insecurities that Armenians in Anatolia experienced during the Armistice years, particularly in 1919–20, when the Turkish National Movement emerged.

Following the signing of the Armistice of Mudros and the occupation of certain regions of Anatolia by Allied forces, the CUP underground organisations worked to prepare the Turkish armed resistance. It was Mustafa Kemal's landing in the port of Samsun in May 1919, however, that launched the resistance. Mustafa Kemal was assigned by the Ottoman government in Istanbul as the Ninth Army's inspector as a means to mediate the escalating tensions between the communities in the region. When Mustafa Kemal landed in Samsun on 19 May 1919, Greek troops had already occupied Izmir; British forces had taken over Urfa, Maraş (Marash), Antep (Aintab), and Samsun; the French military had moved into Adana; and Italian soldiers had set up their camps in Antalya and Konya.[2] The Milli Mücadele (National Struggle) was initiated by Mustafa Kemal to protect the national rights of Ottoman Turkish society in the aftermath of the Ottoman Empire's collapse and the occupation of its lands. The participation and support of Turkish society for the Turkish National Movement significantly increased following the Greek invasion of western Anatolia.[3] At the

[2] See A. L. Macfie, *The End of the Ottoman Empire, 1908–1923* (London: Longman, 1998), 310–12; Stanford J. Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw, *Reform, Revolution, and Republic: The Rise of Modern Turkey, 1808–1975* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 1977), 342; Briton Cooper Busch, *Mudros to Lausanne: Britain's Frontier in West Asia, 1918–1923* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1976), 168–9; Elaine Diana Smith, *Turkey: Origins of the Kemalist Movement and the Government of the Grand National Assembly (1919–1923)* (Washington, DC: Judd & Detweiler, 1959), 11–15.

[3] While there is extensive literature on the emergence and development of the Turkish National Movement, it is primarily in Turkish; below is a selection of the available literature on the subject in English. Erik Jan Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2017) and *The Unionist Factor: The Role of the Committee of Union and Progress in the Turkish National Movement, 1905–1926* (Leiden: Brill, 1984); Stanford J. Shaw, *From Empire to Republic: The Turkish War of National Liberation 1918–1923: A Documentary Study* (5 vols.), vol. 3, part 2 (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2000); Sina Akşin, *Turkey from Empire to Revolutionary Republic: The Emergence of the Turkish Nation from 1789 to the Present* (New York: New York University Press, 2007); Smith, *Turkey*.

beginning of 1919, the socio-political atmosphere in Anatolia had descended into chaos. However, while the Turkish National Movement was rising among the Ottoman Muslim population in interior Anatolia, there remained supporters throughout the lands of Sultan Mehmed VI who openly opposed the movement.

In this period, characterised by a political power vacuum and economic turmoil in Anatolia,[4] Armenians who had been exiled from their native villages and towns and had lost most of their property and wealth were attempting to return to their lands. This territory was the main theatre of Mustafa Kemal's Nationalist movement. The emerging Turkish National Movement in Anatolia and the resulting political turmoil had a decisive effect on the formation of the Armenian community. As the Turkish National Movement formed in Anatolia, dozens of ordinary Armenians sent letters to Armenian papers in Istanbul to draw the public's attention to the condition of Armenians in Anatolia. Caught in the middle of armed conflict between the Turkish Nationalists, Loyalists and Allied soldiers, Armenians feared that the lack of state authority and resultant power vacuum might be transformed into a second wave of massacre and deportation in the region. In their letters, Armenians living in the inner regions of Anatolia asked for financial support from Istanbul Armenians to move to Istanbul or other coastal cities where the Allied occupation forces provided relative security.

Formation of the CUP Resistance Militias

Before the occupation of Izmir and the arrival of Mustafa Kemal in Samsun in May 1919, the CUP underground organisations embarked upon a planned resistance campaign against the native Christian population of the Anatolian provinces.[5] It was those non-Muslims who lived

[4] I use Anatolia as a geographical name to encompass modern-day Turkey's Asian side, including the Aegean, Mediterranean, eastern Anatolia, central Anatolia, Black Sea, and south-eastern Anatolia regions.

[5] Hasan Ali Polat, 'Milli Mücadele Yıllarında Marmara Bölgesi'nde Faaliyet Gösteren Müfrezeler, Milis Kuvvetleri ve Çeteler (1918–1922)' [Detachments, Militia Forces and Gangs Operating in the Marmara Region during the National Struggle Period (1918–1922)] (MA thesis, Selçuk Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi, 2008), 72–95;
Ryan Gingeras, *Sorrowful Shores: Violence, Ethnicity, and the End of the Ottoman Empire, 1912–1923* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011),

in an atmosphere of lawlessness and uncertainty outside of the Allied occupation zones who were the CUP campaign's primary targets. Even though the Armenian as well as the Romioi population had been reduced substantially because of the wartime genocide and deportations, there were still communities in southern Marmara, the eastern Black Sea (Pontus), central Anatolia, and the Adana (Cilicia) regions. Moreover, at the beginning of 1919, there were 5,000 Armenian refugee families in Konya and thousands more in various towns of interior Anatolia, including Ankara, Kayseri, Malatya, Adapazarı, Yozgat, Sivas, Kayseri, Afyon Karahisar, and Bolu.[6] The CUP's campaign of oppression against non-Muslims was fuelled by the Muslim population's resentment of their Christian neighbours and in particular by the proliferation of hatred that resulted from the occupation of Izmir by Greek troops.[7] Some Armenians of Anatolia who survived the wartime catastrophe and returned to their native villages and towns became once again the target of anger and were labelled as the partners of the occupying forces and deemed 'traitors'.[8]

The resistance campaign against the Christian population of Anatolia was launched by the CUP headquarters during a meeting held at the villa of Enver Paşa in Kuruçeşme in late October 1918, only weeks before the signing of the Armistice of Mudros. They established the Karakol (Black Arm) underground organisation with the purpose of organising resistance forces in the interior parts of Anatolia. Karakol supplied these forces with ammunition stockpiled in Istanbul and eased the transportation of high-ranking military

55–81; Nur Bilge Criss, *Istanbul under Allied Occupation, 1918–1923* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 98–115.

6 For the population statistics of the Ottoman Armenians before and after World War I, see Kemal Karpat, *Ottoman Population, 1830–1914: Demographic and Social Characteristics* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1995); Raymond Kevorkian and Paul Paboudjian, *1915 Öncesinde Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Ermeniler* [Armenians in the Ottoman Empire before 1915] (Istanbul: Aras Yayıncılık, 2013).

7 Gingeras, *Sorrowful Shores*, 71; Şirin Güneşer Erzurum, 'The Greek Occupation of Izmir and Protest Meetings in Istanbul (15 May 1919–13 January 1920)' (MA thesis, Boğaziçi University, 2015).

8 For more information on the treatment of the Ottoman Armenians after World War I and during the first years of the Turkish Republic, see Lerna Ekmekçioğlu, *Recovering Armenia: The Limits of Belonging in Post-Genocide Turkey* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2016).

officials to the interior of Anatolia.[9] Thanks to its clandestine routes, Karakol secured the safe passage of captured Ottoman armouries and the transfer of Turkish intellectuals and high-ranking military officers to inner Anatolia. In addition, Karakol was able to establish an intelligence network within the Ottoman government, including an intelligence network within Damat Ferit's mansion.[10] In addition to the activities of Karakol, it should be noted that Enver Paşa urged the Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa in 1918 to ready itself for the second phase of the war, which included preparations such as creating secret ammunition depots in various parts of the Anatolian interior.[11] Moreover, Enver planned to utilise

[9] Zürcher, *The Unionist Factor*, 86–8. Karakol was established and placed under the command of Kara Vasıf and Kara Kemal, who were close allies of Talat Paşa. The organisation benefited from the underground network which was established by affiliates of the Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa, and it organised militia forces consisting of 50 to 200 members in cities and 5 to 10 members in villages. Karakol's aim was explained in the fourth article of its declaration as follows: 'The activities of Karakol inside the country are confined to protect and, where non-existent, establish national unity and territorial integrity by legitimate means, behind the scenes. When faced with oppressors of freedom and justice, however, we shall resort to revolutionary ways. We shall fight and die as free men rather than live as prisoners in shame'. The transportation of arms and men was conducted through the Menzil Hattı (Line of Transport), which was organised by Karakol. The first stop of the line was the Özbekler Tekkesi, a dervish lodge in Üsküdar. The line had other stops in Dudullu and Geyve. Prominent members of the National Movement, including İsmet Inönü and Fevzi Çakmak, were transported to Anatolia via this line. See Criss, *Istanbul under Allied Occupation*, 98–113; Gingeras, *Sorrowful Shores*, 70; A. A. Cruickshank, 'The Young Turk Challenge in Postwar Turkey', *Middle East Journal* 22(1) (Winter 1968), 18.

[10] Zürcher, *The Unionist Factor*, 85. Damat Ferid Paşa was an Ottoman statesman who held the office of Grand Vizier twice during the Armistice years. The first period was between 4 March 1919 and 2 October 1919. The second period was between 5 April 1920 and 21 October 1920, during which he approved the signing of the Treaty of Sèvres. He was also one of the founders of the Freedom and Accord Party, which was in opposition to the CUP. After the victories of the National Movement against the Greek forces, Damat Ferit fled to France and died in Nice in 1923. See Can Ş. Erdem, 'Sadrazam Damat Ferit Paşa' (PhD thesis, Marmara University, 2002); İbrahim Alaettin Gövsa, *Türk Meşhurları Ansiklopedisi* [The Encyclopedia of Famous Turks] (Istanbul: Yedigün, 1945), 136–7.

[11] Polat Safi explains Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa in his article as follows: 'the Special Organization (SO, Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa) was one of the most important products of this endeavour. The SO emerged primarily out of the experience of the CUP in the Tripolitanian and Balkan wars. As an early type of unconventional warfare organization, the SO, which officially existed from 13 November 1913 to 30 October 1918, had no precedent in Ottoman history. Its operations included the recruitment, training, and supervision of armed groups tasked with conducting asymmetric warfare to weaken enemy morale and fighting strength.

the Ottoman army in the Caucasus to defend Anatolia in the case of Allied occupation.[12] As he returned from Germany in October 1918, Talat Paşa urged the Deputy of Edirne, Faik Kaltakkıran, to establish a local organisation to 'prove the Turkishness' of Edirne and to prevent any occupation.[13] Yakup Şevki Paşa, the Ninth Army's commander in the Elviye-i Selase (Three Provinces) region,[14] entrusted the administration of the region to the Milli Şura government and armed the local population rather than evacuating entirely prior to the arrival of British forces.[15] Furthermore, the associations for the defence of national rights – which were established in various provinces of Anatolia including Adana, Izmir, Trabzon, Edirne, and the eastern provinces – were all organised by the CUP authorities.[16] Even though the Turkish historiography insists that the Turkish resistance was started by Mustafa Kemal with his landing in Samsun, it is clear that the CUP played the pivotal role in organising the resistance campaign against the Allied Powers and the native non-Muslims in Anatolia. When Mustafa Kemal arrived in Anatolia in May 1919, as the historian Erik Zürcher highlights in his authoritative work, there were already organised local forces, organisations, ammunition depots, and a well-established underground organisation in Istanbul which provided material support for the Turkish National Movement in the interior parts of Anatolia.

The SO also engaged in small-scale intelligence activity aimed both at strengthening solidarity among Muslims and revealing internal and external threats to Ottoman interests'. See Polat Safi, 'History in the Trench: The Ottoman Special Organization – Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa Literature', *Middle Eastern Studies* 48 (2012), 89–106.

12 Zürcher, *The Unionist Factor*, 85–6.

13 Ibid., 86–7.

14 Elviye-i Selase (Three Provinces) was a geographical term used for the area of Kars, Ardahan, and Batum. This area was left to the Russian Empire during the war in 1877–8. During the Turkish–Armenian War in 1920, the Ankara government managed to bring Kars and Ardahan back under Turkish control; Batum was left to the Bolsheviks.

15 Zürcher, *The Unionist Factor*, 88–9. Following the signing of the Armistice of Mudros, the Ottoman government agreed to evacuate the Elviye-i Selase region. However, rather than evacuating the region and delivering the guns and ammunition to the British authorities, the CUP encouraged the establishment of a local government in the region to protect the rights of the local Muslims. The Cenüb-i Garbi Kafkas Hükümet-i Muvakkate-i Milliyesi (Milli Şura government) was established on 18 January 1919. For detailed information, see Ahmet Ender Gökdemir, *Cenüb-i Garbi Kafkas Hükümeti* [The Provisional Government of the Southwestern Caucasus] (Ankara: Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi, 1998).

16 Gingeras, *Sorrowful Shores*, 77–80; Zürcher, *The Unionist Factor*, 68–105.

Karakol received instructions from its CUP headquarters to establish a paramilitary network in the southern Marmara region, a defensive front against the Allied occupants.[17] Loyal officers, former members of Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa, former guerrilla leaders, and experienced diplomats such as Fuat Carım and Sırrı (Kıbrıslı), together with the bands of Karakol, established a network of militias ranging from Adapazarı to the borders of Istanbul.[18] It was reported by the British officers that in the surrounding areas of Izmit there were acts of violence, which were traced to the CUP, perpetrated by militias towards the Armenians and Romioi. Indeed, Dr Fahri Can, one of the organisers of the Karakol bands in the district, stated in his memoir that Yenibahçeli Şükrü, a former Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa spy and Karakol band leader, declared that the only target of their militia activities was the non-Muslim population of the region.[19] The militia groups' motivation was to preclude land reclamation by the Armenians and Romioi by oppressing the remaining population in the provinces and preventing the return of those in exile.[20] The references and motivations of the Turkish National Movement were not based on ethnicity but rather on religion. As the historian Ryan Gingeras highlights, at the beginning of the movement, particularly until the Sivas Congress where Mustafa Kemal initiated the disbanding of Karakol, the movement benefited from the unifying power of Islamic rhetoric, reflecting the movement as jihad against the Allied occupants.[21]

At the same time, the Ottoman government in Istanbul embarked upon a counter-campaign against CUP activities. Ahmet Anzavur, an elderly Circassian lieutenant loyal to the Sultanate, together with the assistance of the Nigehban Cemiyet-i Askeriyesi (Military Guardian

[17] Gingeras, *Sorrowful Shores*, 78. [18] Ibid. [19] Ibid., 79–80.

[20] Gevorg Vardanyan, Հույն Բնակչությունն Օսմանյան Կայսրությունում Եվ Փոքրասիական Աղետը (Huyn Bnakchutyunn Osmanyan Kaysrudyunum Ew Pograsiagan Aghedě) [The Greek Population of the Ottoman Empire and the Asia Minor Disaster] (Yerevan: Armenian Genocide Museum Institute, 2012), 109.

[21] Gingeras, *Sorrowful Shores*, 70–80. For the rhetoric of the Turkish National Movement, see Erik Jan Zürcher, 'The Vocabulary of Muslim Nationalism', *International Journal of the Sociology of Science* 37 (1999), 81–92; Ahmet Yıldız, *Ne Mutlu Türküm Diyene: Türk Ulusal Kimliğinin Etno-Seküler Sınırları (1919–1938)* [How Happy Is He Who Calls Himself a Turk: The Ethno-secular Boundaries of Turkish National Identity (1919–1938)] (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2001), 90–5; Gingeras, *Sorrowful Shores*, 74–75.

Society),[22] for example, expressed his resistance to the Turkish National Movement, which he argued was 'controlled by CUP members who sucked the blood of an innocent nation and made a fortune'.[23] Many native Armenians of the southern Marmara region, amid the clashes between the Loyalists and Nationalists, tried to flee to Istanbul or Izmir to save their lives, with some of the Armenian men joining the paramilitary groups and fighting alongside the Ottoman Loyalist and Greek forces.[24]

The Turkish National Movement as a Continuation of the CUP

There is a consensus in the official Turkish history narrative that the occupation of Izmir in May 1919 'awoke the sleeping giant', which is to say that the Turkish Muslim community realised that the Allied occupation of certain parts of Anatolia could become permanent, which further catalysed the organisation of armed resistance.[25] The Allied occupation

[22] The Nigehban Cemiyet-i Askeriyesi (Military Guardian Society or Society of Army Watchmen) was formed in January 1919 to eliminate the underground activities of the CUP in the capital, Istanbul, as well as in the provinces. The members of the society were ardent supporters of the Sultanate and the Ottoman Cabinet against the Turkish National Movement.

[23] Gingeras, *Sorrowful Shores*, 95.

[24] Loyalists were those who supported the Ottoman government and fought against the Turkish National Movement. While the Turkish National Movement was growing in the interior of Anatolia, opposition movements within the Ottoman/Muslim community started to emerge against the Nationalists. On the political ground, the Hürriyet ve İtilaf Fırkası (The Liberty and Understanding Party), the primary opposition of the Turkish National Movement, established close alliances with the Sultanate. Additionally, the Association of the Friends of England, founded by Sait Molla, owner of the *Türkçe İstanbul* daily, supported the British mandate over Anatolia and provided financial assistance to Loyalist paramilitaries. The Nigehban Cemiyet-i Askeriyesi, which was established by a group of officers who were loyal to the Sultanate, and the Teali İslam Cemiyeti (Advancement of Islam Society), which was established by Sheikh-al-islam Mustafa Sabri, are examples of prominent groups that opposed the Turkish National Movement. On the battlefield, the Ottoman government gathered a new army, the Kuva-yı İnzibatiye (The Disciplinary Forces), the roughly 3,000 members of which were mostly attached to the Nigehban. Furthermore, a Circassian major who served in the Ottoman army during World War I, Ahmet Anzavur, also joined the Loyalist ranks.

[25] After the occupation of Izmir by the Greek forces on 15 May 1919, tens of meetings were organised by the Ottoman Muslim community in various locations in Anatolia and Thrace. For example, on 16 May, 19 May, and 28 November 1919, thousands of people gathered in Bursa, İnegöl, and Balıkesir, respectively. Local communities in the Anatolian towns and cities submitted protest telegrams to Istanbul. See Fahri Yetim, 'Milli Mücadele

produced the unintentional result of creating vast numbers of recruits for Mustafa Kemal and his compatriots.[26] However, while Ottoman Armenians' opinions with regard to the Turkish National Movement have been largely absent from the historiography, contemporaneous publications illustrate how the majority of Armenian public opinion at the time believed that the fledging Turkish National Movement in Anatolia was organised by the CUP headquarters. For instance, an editorial published in the *Koyamard* (The Battle of Existence) paper on 2 May 1920 argued that the Turkish National Movement benefited from the intelligence service established by the CUP. The author asserted that this intelligence service received information from the Sublime Porte, ministries, opposition party centres, and even the Allied Powers' headquarters.[27] *Koyamard* further insisted that the Turkish National Movement was 'the movement started by Talat and Enver and run by Mustafa Kemal and Rauf Bey'.[28] This view was much later corroborated

Döneminde Mitingler 1918–1920' ['Meetings during the National Struggle 1918–1920'] (MA thesis, Anadolu University, 1994), 60–75; *Alemdar*, 24 May 1919, no: 152; Şirin Güneşer Erzurum, 'The Greek Occupation of Izmir and Protest Meetings in Istanbul (15 May 1919–13 January 1920)' (MA thesis, Boğaziçi University, 2015), 50–1. In Istanbul, university students organised a gathering of 30,000 people in Üsküdar on 20 May. On the following day the university lecturers declared that the occupation of Izmir by the Greeks was unlawful and they would resist to the end. On 23 May, 300,000 people were gathered at Sultanahmet Square to protest the occupation. See Erzurum, 'The Greek Occupation of Izmir', 58–195; Edhem Eldem, 'L'Illustration'dan Seçmeler: 7 Şubat 1920 – Sultanahmet Mitingleri' [Selections from *L'Illustration*: 7 February 1920 – Sultanahmet Meetings], *Toplumsal Tarih* 212 (2011); Ali Fuat Cebesoy, *Milli Mücadele Hatıraları* [Memoirs of National Struggle] (Istanbul: Vatan Neşriyatı, 1953), 63–5.

[26] After the occupation of Izmir by Greek forces, hundreds of telegrams written by local Muslim communities were sent from Anatolian towns and cities protesting the aggressive campaign of the Greek forces. See Erzurum, 'The Greek Occupation of Izmir', 49–51.

[27] *Koyamard*, Ինչպէս Կազմուեցաւ Միլլին (Inchbes Gazmuetsav Millin) [How Was the National Movement Established?], 2 May 1920, no. 13.

[28] Hüseyin Rauf (Orbay) was an Ottoman naval officer and statesman. He was chief of naval staff during World War I and a member of the Ottoman delegation at the signing of the Armistice of Mudros. Following the establishment of the Turkish National Movement in Ankara, he joined Mustafa Kemal in his endeavour. He played an active role in the Erzurum and Sivas congresses and the War of Independence. For his biography, see Cemal Kutay, *Osmanlıdan Cumhuriyete: Yüzyılımızda Bir İnsanımız Hüseyin Rauf Orbay* [From Empire to Republic: One of Our People in Our Century Rauf Orbay], 5 vols. (Istanbul: Kazancı Kitap Ticaret, 1992). For his memoirs, see Rauf Orbay, *Cehennem Değirmeni-Siyasi Hatıralarım* [Hell's Mill: My Political Memoirs] (Istanbul: Emre Yayınevi, 1993).

by historians Enver Behnan Şapolyo and Erik Jan Zürcher, who argue that the underground organisations of the CUP were providing intelligence to the Turkish National Movement. Indeed, historians have established that the transportation of both ammunition and manpower was facilitated by these underground organisations.[29]

Another ARF organ, *Jagadamard*, put forward that the Turkish National Movement was launched at the end of World War I by troops returning from the Ottoman battlefields to the interior parts of Anatolia and by those 'CUP criminals' who 'committed crimes during the war'.[30] Hovhannes Amaduni, an active ARF member in Istanbul and editor of *Jagadamard* during the Armistice years, underlined that even though the CUP was no longer in power, it continued to work in the provinces, together with the help of the local Muslim population, to prevent the return of the native Armenian population to the six provinces. He argued that the Turkish National Movement in Anatolia was 'nothing but the new cover of the CUP' and that the new faces of the movement shared the same ultimate goal as the CUP, namely, 'expelling the native Christian population from Anatolia'.[31] Hovhannes Amaduni further asserted that the CUP's secret organisation armed local paramilitary groups to protect the lands and resettled thousands of Muslim refugees from the Caucasus to engineer the demographics of the region in favour of the Ottoman government.[32] An editorial published in *Giligia* (Cilicia) argued that, while the Turkish National Movement presented itself as anti-Entente, its primary aim was 'to eliminate the native Christian population', particularly the Armenians. The editorial concluded, 'It [the Turkish National Movement] is the continuation of the bloody plan of the CUP'.[33]

[29] Enver Behnan Şapolyo, *Kuvayı Milliye Tarihi: Gerilla* [The History of the Nationalist Forces: Guerrilla] (Ankara: Yıldız Matbaası, 1957), 197–8.

[30] *Jagadamard*, Միլլի Շարժումը Եւ Մուսթաֆա Քէմալ (Milli Sharzhumě Ew Mustafa Kemal) [The National Movement and Mustafa Kemal], 23 July 1920, no. 509.

[31] *Jagadamard*, Իթթիհատական Դաւերը Կը Շարունակուին (Ittihadagan Taverě Gě Sharunaguin) [CUP Conspiracy Continues], 18 July 1919, no. 209.

[32] Ibid. Hovhannes Amaduni's argument that the CUP paramilitary groups targeted the Christian population is echoed in the work of Ryan Gingeras, who emphasises that the reports sent after the first clashes in the south Marmara region in January 1919 detailed how the pro-Nationalist units targeted Armenians and Romioi returning from exile. See Gingeras, *Sorrowful Shores*, 69.

[33] *Giligia*, Քէմալականները Եւ Քրիստոնեաները (Kemalagannerě Ew Krisdonyanerě) [Kemalists and Armenians], 15 October 1920, no. 442.

Both *Koyamard* and *Jagadamard*, which were publications of the ARF, and *Giligia,* whose politics were close to those of the ARF, agreed that the Turkish National Movement was the CUP in different clothes. The publications of patriotic/nationalist Armenian papers such as *Koyamard*, *Jagadamard*, and *Giligia* demonstrate that the patriotic/nationalist factions of the Armenian community saw the Turkish National Movement as equivalent to the CUP. Moreover, the liberal and independent factions also agreed with this notion. For instance, Hovhannes Asbed,[34] a liberal Armenian intellectual, argued that the Turkish National Movement was developed by a select group of people who were active participants in the CUP's wartime operations, including the Armenian massacres and the nationalisation of the economy. He affirmed that it was not possible for the Armenian population to trust the Turkish National Movement, which had emerged under these circumstances.[35]

The analysis in another liberal/independent paper, *Zhamanag*, further supported the argument that the majority of the Armenian community considered the Turkish National Movement to be a product of the CUP. An example of the analysis in *Zhamanag* illustrates the position of the paper:

> The Armenians in the provinces have the right to be afraid, because they know and see that that organisation [the Turkish National Movement] is a name-change of the CUP, which led the annihilation of the Armenian population . . . The situation in Anatolia is insecure because the CUP's satellites have taken office. The new organisation [the Turkish National Movement] is just a cover for them.[36]

Ardashes Kalpakjyan, a liberal Armenian intellectual contributor to *Zhamanag*, stressed that the Turkish National Movement had not been born from a sense of nationalism but rather from 'the envy, arrogance

[34] Hovhannes Asbed, an Armenian intellectual and politician, was born in Istanbul in 1873. He was one of the members of the editorial board of *Verchin Lur* during the Armistice years. In addition to his position at *Verchin Lur*, he published the Armenian weekly magazine *Hay Midk* (The Armenian Mind). He was elected to the Armenian National Assembly during the Armistice years.

[35] *Verchin Lur*, Այժմէական Խօսքեր Միլլի (Ayzhmeagan Khosker-Milli) [Actual Words – National Movement], 14 August 1920, no. 1951.

[36] *Zhamanag*, Գոյութեան Պայքարը (Koyutyan Baykarě) [The Struggle of Existence], 22 October 1919, no. 3655.

and unwillingness of a group of CUP members' who 'could not digest the defeats that they faced on the battlefields'.[37]

Members of the Turkish National Movement supposedly pledged that they had no ties with the CUP,[38] and Mustafa Kemal repeatedly expressed that the movement was not related to the CUP. Yet, both historical research and contemporary Armenian accounts demonstrate the connection between the CUP and the Turkish National Movement. Historian Erik Zürcher, for example, is credited with revealing that not only the ideology but also the executive team, underground organisations, policies, and strategies were identical to those of the CUP.[39] As has been demonstrated in this section, contemporary Armenian intellectuals recognised the connection between the CUP and the Turkish National Movement.[40] Regardless of their diverse political affiliations or worldviews – be they patriotic/nationalist or independent/liberal – Armenian intellectuals agreed that Mustafa Kemal's movement was 'the second phase of the CUP's plan'. This section has established that the Turkish National Movement was perceived by Armenian public opinion to be the continuation of CUP. The next section will explore how they reached this conclusion.

Insecurity and Instability

The fear within the community is huge. The government authorities, who were keen on listening to our complaints at the beginning of the Armistice, no longer want to hear our complaints . . . This will be *yergrort darakrutyun* [a second deportation] for us.[41]

[37] *Zhamanag*, Մենք Մեր Իրաւունքը Միայն Կ՛ուզենք (Menk Mer Iravunkě Miayn Guzenk) [We Demand Only Our Rights], 16 October 1919, no. 3650.

[38] During the Sivas Congress, the members took the following pledge: 'I pledge that I shall not pursue any personal aim other than the happiness and salvation of the fatherland during the Congress. I shall not work to restore the CUP and shall not work for any political parties'. *Yerevan*, no. 42, 6 October 1919; Cruickshank, 'The Young Turk Challenge', 18; Zürcher, *The Unionist Factor*, 68–9.

[39] Zürcher, in his authoritative work, demonstrates the connection between the CUP and the Turkish National Movement. See Zürcher, *The Unionist Factor*. Sina Akşin, however, argues that the movement, which was democratic and national, was created by Mustafa Kemal and his cadre. See Sina Akşin, *İstanbul Hükümetleri ve Milli Mücadele* [Istanbul Governments and the National Struggle] (Istanbul: İş Bankası Yayınları, 2010).

[40] Zürcher, *The Unionist Factor*.

[41] *Jagadamard*, Հայերէն Բռնի Զինուոր Կ՛ուզեն (Hayeren Prni Zinuor Guzen) [They Forcefully Demand Soldiers from Armenians], 20 June 1919, no. 185.

This paragraph is an excerpt from the conclusion of a letter written by an Armenian from Tokat, which is illustrative of the particular mindset of the community. Local Armenians were hopeful about the future at the beginning of the Armistice period. In the months following the fall of the CUP government, it was understood that, while the CUP administration had departed from Istanbul, it continued to work in the provinces under the name of the 'National Movement', and Armenians feared that the authorities would issue a 'second deportation' order.

The Armenian community continued to live in Anatolia under the Nationalist administration and suffered in the warzones where the Turkish Nationalists and Greek forces clashed. Since the wartime conflict in Anatolia, initiated by the policies of the CUP, continued during the Armistice years under the umbrella of the Turkish National Movement, Armenians saw the Turkish National Movement as the CUP's descendant. Within the broader context of post-war politics in the Ottoman Empire, the Armenian community shared the same view as the Loyalists, who similarly accused the Turkish National Movement of perpetuating the CUP's governance.

The occupation of Izmir by Greek troops escalated tensions in the interior parts of Anatolia, and the hatred among local Muslims towards the Armenians and Romioi significantly increased. Hundreds of reports sent to Armenian papers by local correspondents urged the authorities to take immediate action to protect Armenians. For instance, in the very early days of the Greek occupation of Izmir, in Gürle (Gemlik), the former Ittihadist kaymakam Orhan Gazi gathered gendarmes and a group of Albanian paramilitaries and took to the hills to prepare for the plundering of Armenian and Romioi businesses. The Armenians of Gürle and the surrounding villages were bewildered that they could not find a government authority whom they could address regarding the threat posed by paramilitary groups.[42] In Malatya, CUP officials claimed that the Armenian commander Antranik would occupy the eastern provinces, including Malatya, within fifteen days and local Muslims should arm themselves against this threat. The son of the famous Ittihadist Halim Bey organised a volunteer brigade in the

[42] *Jagadamard*, Կիւրլէն Ահ ու Սարսափի Մէջ (Giwrlen Ah u Sarsapi Mech) [Gürle in Terror], 24 May 1919, no. 163.

town to defend it against Armenians.[43] In Keskin (a Muslim-populated town close to Ankara), a meeting was held in front of the town hall and the kaymakam gave a speech explaining that 'the new war against the Christians' was about to begin. Lieutenant Kaplan Bey, who returned from the Caucasian battlefield, organised an irregular brigade in Keskin, which provided its members with monthly salaries and the necessary weapons and ammunition.[44] It is important to highlight a point for the discussion here: as in the example of Keskin and Malatya, the propaganda of CUP-affiliated officials was intended to disseminate conspiracies and misinformation regarding non-Muslims in order to galvanise the Turkish Muslim population against them. The CUP's propaganda and the underground activities hence resulted in the creation of an insecure environment for the Armenians in Anatolia.

A report from Balıkesir written by an Armenian volunteer correspondent, entitled 'They Forcefully Demand Soldiers from Armenians', provides crucial insights into the conditions experienced by Armenians. The headmen of the Armenian and Romioi villages were invited to the police department and forced to sign a document stating, 'We will recruit your youth when we need. If you issue fake certificates, at the first opportunity, we will send you to the court-martial'. According to the report, local Armenians in Balıkesir were in a panic, as the attitude of the Turkish Muslim population had pivoted against them after the occupation of Izmir, with paramilitary groups beginning to emerge in the region. The local Armenian population had no choice but to sell their properties at 20 per cent of their real value and migrate to Izmir or Istanbul. These reports – be they propaganda, dramatisation, or reality – reflected the local Armenians' sentiments; thus, they are crucial for a better understanding of the collective position of Armenians.

There was strong censorship of the Armenian press, especially for news and publications related to the Armenian genocide, such as memoirs, reports explaining the wartime events, and letters which were sent from Anatolian towns and villages. The two reports sent from Balıkesir and Tokat demonstrate that the local Armenians

[43] *Hay Tsayn*, Ապահովութիւնը Մալաթիոյ Մէջ (Abahovutiwnĕ Malatioy Mech) [Security in Malatya], 12 June 1919, no. 146.

[44] *Jagadamard*, Ջարդի Սպառնալիք Քէսքինի Մէջ (Charti Sbarnalik Keskini Mech) [Massacre Threat in Keskin], 15 June 1919, no. 180.

feared political turmoil that could result in a 'second deportation' for them. Furthermore, the Armenian papers claimed that the CUP underground organisations led an economic boycott of Armenian businesses, further increasing the level of insecurity for the community. This economic boycott of Armenian businesses was so successful that Armenians eventually could not cover their daily expenses.[45] In Bursa, the boycott against Armenian shopkeepers left the Armenian community in desperation, and news with regard to the activities of bands was shared from neighbouring towns.[46] The same situation of disorder was described in another report regarding the Izmit and Adapazarı regions, calling the area extending from Izmit to Geyve 'a nest of bands'.[47]

After the assembly of the Sivas Congress in September 1919, the local paramilitaries, which previously were organised by the CUP underground organisations, were transformed into factions of the Turkish National Movement and served to enact its policies.[48] For example, Circassian and Albanian armed groups affiliated with the Nationalists were active in the Adapazarı and Izmit regions. According to reports received from Adapazarı, Nationalist forces pressured the kaymakam to resign from his position and appointed new pro-Nationalist officers. Similarly, in Kırmastı and Bandırma, the Nationalist forces occupied the telegram offices and forced government officers who were loyal to the Ottoman government in Istanbul to resign and leave the town. In Konya, the 11th Regiment of the Ottoman military joined Nationalist forces and took control of Ereğli and central Konya after convincing Italian forces that their struggle was a product of the country's internal politics.[49] After assuming control of the city centre in Konya, the

[45] *Hay Tsayn*, Հայաստան Անապահով (Hayasdan Anabahov) [Armenia Insecure], 1 August 1919, no. 188.

[46] *Jagadamard*, Երկիւղալի Վիճակ Պրուսայի Մէջ (Yergiwghali Vijag Brusayi Mech) [Frightening Condition in Bursa], 12 August 1919, no. 230.

[47] *Jagadamard*, Բիւթանիոյ Շրջանը (Piwtanioy Shrchanĕ) [Bithynia Region], 16 August 1919, no. 234.

[48] After the Sivas Congress, Mustafa Kemal and his cadre decided to centralise the armed resistance. See Gingeras, *Sorrowful Shores*, 75–7. For the developments in the Sivas Congress and the efforts of Mustafa Kemal to unite the movement under one umbrella and organise the paramilitaries under one command, see Fatih Gümüş, 'Decentralism versus Centralism in Ottoman Anatolia, 1919–1922' (MA thesis, Boğaziçi University, 2002), 52–79.

[49] *Verchin Lur*, Միլլիները Եւ Հայերը (Millinerĕ Ew Hayerĕ) [Nationalists and Armenians], 4 October 1919, no. 1690.

Nationalist authorities started to recruit Muslim and Christian men into their military organisations, disregarding the articles of the Armistice of Mudros regarding the military's demobilisation.[50] Following the news that the Nationalist authorities were conscripting Armenian men living in their controlled territory, the Armenian Patriarch Zaven submitted a written protest, declaring that native Armenian families were not secure under the Nationalist administration.[51] Mustafa Kemal, in response, published a statement that the Armenian and Turkish Muslim communities in Anatolia were living in harmony and prosperity.[52] The contact between the leader of the Turkish National Movement and the Armenian Patriarch regarding the conditions of Armenians in Anatolia led to a discussion in the press. While the pro-Nationalist papers such as *Vakit* and *İkdam* defended the assertion that there was no security issue in Anatolia for Armenians, pro-Loyalist Turkish papers such as *Peyam* (The News) and *Alemdar* welcomed the claims of the Patriarch in earnest. The pro-Loyalist and the Armenian press paid particular attention to the conditions of Armenians in interior Anatolia.

Indeed, the disorder and insecurity in Anatolian towns grew to critical levels. Even the authorities of the Turkish National Movement did not have complete authority over the local paramilitaries, many of which were engaging in the unsanctioned plundering of villages. For instance, the commander of Nationalist forces in the Bursa region, Bekir Sami (Günsav), after receiving news regarding the plundering of villages in the Çanakkale region, asked his colleague in a telegram whether these burglar militias were under his command or

[50] Ibid. According to the fifth and twentieth articles of the Armistice of Mudros, recruiting men into military organisations was prohibited and the immediate demobilisation of the Ottoman army was accepted by the Ottoman government. See Gwynne Dyer, 'The Turkish Armistice of 1918 2: A Lost Opportunity: The Armistice Negotiations of Moudros', *Middle Eastern Studies* 8(3) (1972), 340–1.

[51] *İkdam*, 'Anadolu'da Gayrmüslime ve Türkler' [Non-Muslims and Turks in Anatolia], 22 October 1919, no. 8152; *Tasvir-i Efkar*, 'Ermeni Patriğini Bir Tekzip' [A Refutation in Response to the Armenian Patriarch], 22 October 1919, no. 2878; *Vakit*, 'Anadolu'da Asayiş Berkemaldir' [No Public Security Issue in Anatolia], 22 October 1919, no. 708; *Alemdar*, 'Anadolu'daki Hristiyanlar' [Christians in Anatolia], 22 October 1919.

[52] *İkdam*, 'Anadolu'da Gayrmüslime ve Türkler'; *Tasvir-i Efkar*, 'Ermeni Patriğini Bir Tekzip'; *Vakit*, 'Anadolu'da Asayiş Berkemaldir'; *Alemdar*, 'Anadolu'daki Hristiyanlar'.

not.[53] Köprülülü Hamdi Bey, a prominent pro-Nationalist in the south Marmara region, illustrated the seriousness of the events by reporting that the Nationalist authorities were demanding high taxes from villagers, which they refused to pay, as they were already being taxed by local paramilitaries; additionally, he stated that they were unsuccessful in controlling the brigades of Çerkes Ethem, whose plundering was causing great economic hardship for the villagers.[54]

The power vacuum created a time of chaos and conflict in Anatolia, and Armenians who continued to live in these conflict zones experienced great suffering. As has been demonstrated in this section, they expressed their concerns about their community's security and asked for help from the authorities in Istanbul. The next section will provide a unique case to illustrate the extent of insecurity that prevailed in Anatolian towns and villages.

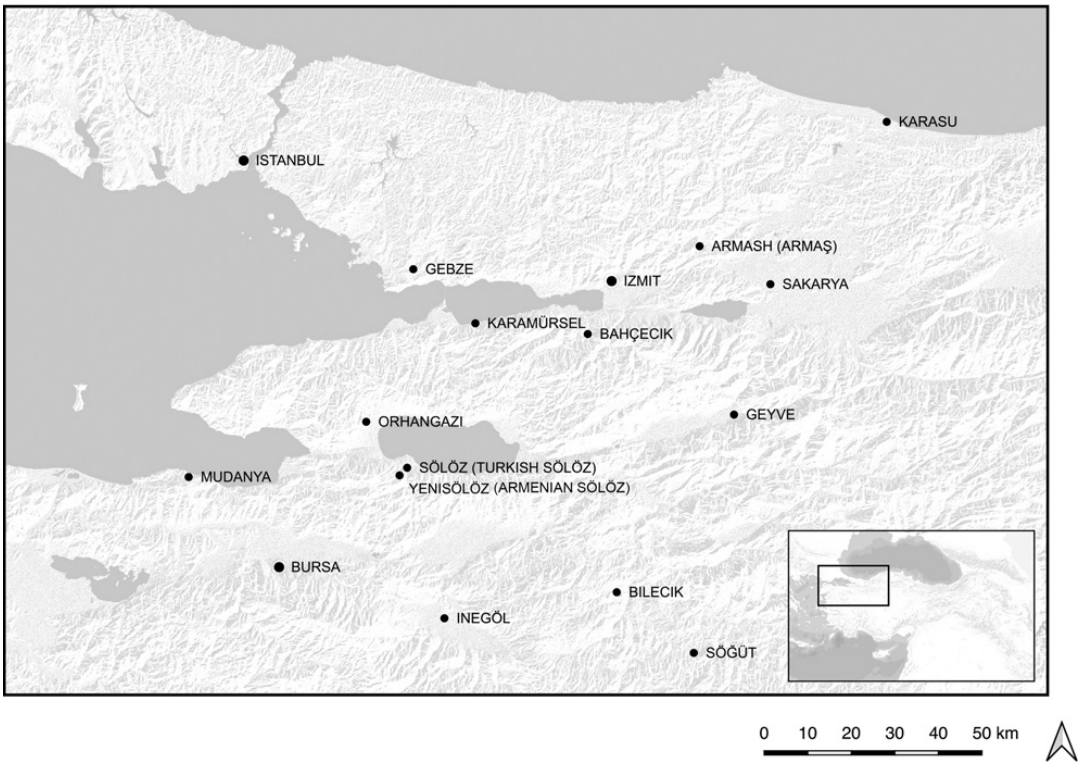
An Example of Insecurity: The South Marmara Region

In this atmosphere of insecurity, Ottoman Armenians feared becoming victims of mass violence for a second time. The insecure environment affected the formation of their political position. Events in the south Marmara region (see Map 2.1) further illustrate the extent of insecurity that prevailed in the provinces of Anatolia and how that insecurity impacted the Armenian community's perception of the Turkish National Movement. It was in this environment that the pro-independence and pro-Allied position of the Armenian community was shaped.

Insecurity played a vital role in the formation of the Armenian community's view of the Turkish National Movement. Even though the wartime Armenian deportations ceased after the signing of the Armistice of Mudros, the armed conflict in the towns continued, especially following the Allied occupation. Consequently, Armenians who were able to return to their native towns and villages found themselves in an insecure environment where, on the one hand, the Nationalist paramilitaries were actively working to win the favour of the local Muslim populations, while on the other hand, the Loyalists

[53] Gingeras, *Sorrowful Shores*, 82.

[54] Sedat Çizmeci, 'Marmara Bölgesi'nde Milli Mücadeleye Karşı Çıkarılan Ayaklanmalar' [Revolts against the National Movement in the Marmara Region] (MA thesis, Fırat Üniversitesi, 2010), 16.



Map 2.1 The south Marmara region

and Allied occupation forces were focused on eliminating the Turkish National Movement.

When the Nationalist forces entered Adapazarı on 23 May 1920, they arrested local notables who were pro-Loyalist and forced Armenian men to enlist in the military. Those who were too old to serve in the military were forced to pay bribes to save their lives. Those who had Circassian or Abkhazian acquaintances were spared after giving relatively small payments, but Armenians and Romioi were required to give vastly larger sums.[55] Shirin Odabashyan, who fought against the Nationalist forces, was hanged together with an Arab *alim* (scholar) who supported the fatwa of the caliph and was thus pro-Loyalist.[56] In Izmit, some Armenians escaped via mountain paths from Adapazarı to the Armaş (Armash) region during the night. On 29 May, 1,500 refugees arrived in Izmit from the surrounding villages. The local Armenian leadership asked the British representatives in Izmit to take the necessary measures to ensure the safe passage of these Armenian refugees from the surrounding areas, which were under the authority of the Nationalist forces. Nevertheless, the British authorities responded that they could not provide this assistance, but they did pledge to provide humanitarian aid if the refugees were able to reach Izmit.[57]

According to the official bulletin of the Armenian church in Izmit, on 8 July 1920, village headsmen were summoned to a meeting held by Nationalist authorities, in which they stated that the establishment of Turkish–Armenian friendship was discussed and Armenians were given assurance that they would be safe in Geyve. The following week the kaymakam of Geyve, together with Turkish notables, went to the train station and ordered some 400 Armenian and Romioi refugees sheltering there to leave for the village of Eşme within two hours. The Romioi population of Ortaköy village, consisting of 2,000

[55] *Yergir*, Միլլիճիներու Խժդժութիւնները (Millijineru Khzhtzhutiwnnerě) [Oppression of Nationalists], 13 June 1920, no. 230.

[56] Ibid. According to the fatwa, those who organised the Turkish National Movement were declared as 'irreligious, poisonous, factious and so-called patriots' who wanted to destroy the Ottoman Empire. See *Jagadamard*, 14 April 1920, no. 428; Smith, *Turkey*, 27; Şerife Özkan, 'Yüzellilikler and Süleyman Şefik Kemali: A Legitimacy and Security Issue' (MA thesis, Boğaziçi University, 2005), 8–9; Polat, 'Milli Mücadele Yıllarında', 32.

[57] *Jagadamard*, Ի՞նչ Վիճակի Մէջ է Պարտիզակը (Inch Vijagi Mech e Bardizagě) [What Is the Condition of Bardizak?], 5 June 1920, no. 470.

inhabitants, was moved to Eşme village and the armed forces, under the order of the commander of the gendarmes of Geyve, set fire to all properties. Kıncılar village, which was populated by Armenians, and the Romioi villages of Saraçlı, Burhaniye, Saklı, and Kup shared the same fate.[58] Testimony from a young Armenian man who witnessed the events in Geyve detailed how, on 10 July, Ortaköy, Burhaniye, Saraçlı, and Kup – villages containing Hay-hourum populations[59] – were plundered. According to him, Armenian and Romioi refugees, around 150 families who were sheltering at the railway station in Geyve, were forced to move to Eşme village and were attacked en route.[60]

An incident in the villages of Sölöz – there were two villages sharing the same name, one Armenian and one Turkish – illustrates the complexity of the conflict. On 28 July, the pro-Nationalist commander Yahya Bey sent a message to the Armenians of Armenian Sölöz, asking for weapons, ammunition, and horses. The Armenian men of Armenian Sölöz decided to establish a self-defence unit, sent their wives and children to Gemlik, and responded to the pro-Nationalist commander that they would not pay any tribute. The spokesperson of the Armenian self-defence unit answered, 'We do not have any horses, money, or weapons to give you. Come, we know how to deal with you'.[61] On 6 August, the Armenian self-defence unit in Armenian Sölöz faced the Nationalists on the south-eastern edge of the town and started firing, forcing the Nationalists to withdraw. The following day, seventy-six Nationalist troops entered Turkish Sölöz. The Armenians announced to the Turks in the neighbouring village that if they were to accommodate these Nationalist

[58] *Jagadamard*, Ի՞նչպէս Կատարուեցաւ Կէյվէի Ահաւոր Սպանդը (Inchbes Gadaruetsav Geyvei Ahavor Sbantě) [How Did the Terrible Slaughter Take Place in Geyve?], 24 July 1920, no. 510.

[59] There were Hay-Horoum villages in Anatolia where the Romioi spoke Armenian as their mother tongue. Hay-Horoum was a name given to those who were ethnically Romioi (Greek Orthodox) but spoke Armenian. See Hervé Georgelin, 'Perception of the Other's Fate: What Greek Orthodox Refugees from the Ottoman Empire Reported about the Destruction of Ottoman Armenians', *Journal of Genocide Research* 10(1) (2008), 62–3.

[60] *Jagadamard*, Ի՞նչպէս Կատարուեցաւ Կէյվէի Ահաւոր Սպանդը (Inchbes Gadaruetsav Geyvei Ahavor Sbantě) [How Did the Terrible Slaughter Take Place in Geyve?]; *Yergir*, Կէյվէյի Ջարդը (Geyveyi Chartě) [The Massacre of Geyve], 24 July 1920, no. 263.

[61] *Jagadamard*, Սէոլէոզի Մէջ (Seoleozi Mech) [In Sölöz], 12 August 1920, no. 52.

forces in their village, Armenians would have no other choice but to attack them. Following the Sölöz Armenians' ultimatum, the Turkish population in Turkish Sölöz resisted the Nationalist forces, clearing them from their village. Two days later, a prominent Nationalist leader in the region, Cemal Bey, together with his 150 cavaliers, attacked Turkish Sölöz in response. Cemal Bey ordered the artillery to fire on the village, and the inhabitants of Turkish Sölöz abandoned their positions in fright. At that moment, Armenians from the adjacent town entered the village to aid their Turkish neighbours in their fight against the Nationalists. After hours of clashes, Cemal Bey and his forces withdrew from the village, leaving twenty-eight Mauser rifles and a great amount of ammunition, but it was reported that 250 houses in the village, all of them belonging to Turkish families, had been damaged by the Nationalists.[62] It was stated in another report that when the inhabitants of Turkish Sölöz tried to escape, the neighbouring Tutlıca village, which was entirely populated by Turks, did not welcome them and even refused to provide shelter in their village.[63] The Sölöz Turks, whose village was set on fire by the Nationalists, asked for aid from the Greek administration in Bursa via the Armenian prelate's mediation in Bursa, Sarkis Vartabed. The majority of the Sölöz Turks were given shelter in the houses of Armenians in Armenian Sölöz and Gemlik.[64] Moreover, the Armenians of Arslanbeg, as in Sölöz, defended themselves against the attacks of Nationalist forces; six Armenians died during the clashes, and the Nationalist forces withdrew after the intervention of a British cruiser.[65]

The Sölöz villages serve as a prime example of the conflict as it was playing out in the small towns of the south Marmara region. On one side, there were Armenians and Turks who were collaborating on self-defence activities in opposition to the Turkish National Movement; on the other side, there were the irregular forces aligned with the Nationalists. Armenians felt insecure in Anatolia, and as a result

[62] *Jagadamard*, Սէոլէոզի Հայերուն Հերոսական Դիմադրութիւնը (Seoleozi Hayerun Herosagan Timatrutiwnĕ) [The Heroic Resistance of Sölöz], 8 August 1920, no. 523.

[63] *Jagadamard*, Մոտիք Ճակատէն (Modik Jagaden) [From a Closer Front], 14 August 1920, no. 528.

[64] Ibid.

[65] *Jagadamard*, Արսլանպէկի Դիմադրութիւնը (Arslanbegi Timatrutiwnĕ) [The Resistance of Arslanbeg], 1 August 1920, no. 517.

they were often allied with those Loyalist Turkish Muslim groups which opposed the Turkish National Movement, finding themselves part of the greater anti-Nationalist camp of the post-war political landscape.

This alliance could be seen in Bardizag (Bahçecik) as well. On 28 August 1920, it was reported that a division consisting of 300 men, of which 70 were Nationalists, attacked Bardizag (Bahçecik) but local Armenians, together with native Romioi and Turks who organised a self-defence unit consisting of 250 men, defended the region and forced the Nationalist forces to fall back. The clashes that occurred in the surrounding areas of Izmit caused the Armenian and Romioi populations to move to the city centre, where at the beginning of September there were 4,000 Armenian and Romioi refugees. The British authorities transported these refugees to Derince, a town close to Istanbul, and provided water, food, and shelter.[66]

Despite the onslaught, Armenian groups organised armed resistance against the Nationalist forces in the small towns of the south Marmara region on a few occasions. For instance, in Sölöz, Arslanbeg, and Bardizag (Bahçecik), the Armenian units succeeded in pushing Nationalist forces back. However, these were small-scale local clashes which did not appreciably impact the overall conflict. In addition to Sölöz and Arslanbeg, self-defence units were organised by the Armenians, Romioi, and a group of Circassians in the Sarı-Soğan and Çiftlik villages (both located in Adapazarı). These two paramilitary groups were commanded by Avedis and Stavri, with each consisting of around 100 volunteers.[67] Armenians, particularly those living in the warzones in the south Marmara region, allied with the Greek occupation forces and the Loyalists to save their lives during the clashes between the Loyalists and Nationalists and again during the ensuing war between the Greek and Nationalist forces.

[66] *Jagadamard*, Միլլիական Շարժումը Իզմիթի Շրջանին Մէջ (Milliagan Sharzhumĕ Izmiti Shrchanin Mech) [The National Movement in the Izmit Region], 2 September 1920, no. 543.

[67] *Jagadamard*, Հայ Եւ Յոյն Ինքնապաշտպանութեան Խումբերը Վերակազմուած Են Ատափազարի Շուրջը (Hay Ew Huyn Inknabashdmanutyan Khumperĕ Veragazmuadz En Adapazari Shurchĕ) [Armenian and Romioi Self-Defence Units Are Re-Organised in the Adapazarı Region], 5 December 1920, no. 624.

For the Armenian community, the towns – especially those located in the interior parts of Anatolia – and the conflict zones where the Nationalists and Greek occupying forces fought for control were not secure. In the eyes of the Armenian community, this insecurity was the intended result of the Turkish National Movement's strategies, and it played a vital role in the formation of the Armenians' perception of the movement, to which the greater Armenian community was opposed.

Conclusion

At this juncture, Ottoman Armenians faced three types of insecurity and existential concern. First among these was the insecurity which prevailed in the post-genocide landscape. Armenians were subject to loss of property, displacement, and dispossession. Many Armenians who managed to stay alive and returned to their hometowns found that their properties were already occupied by newcomers; consequently, many of them became refugees who lived in tents on the streets. The second concern was the insecurity brought about by the Allied occupation and the Turkish insurgency. The occupation of Izmir by Greek forces and Istanbul by the Allied Powers increased the anger of the Ottoman Muslims towards the non-Muslim populations. As a result, the Armenians found themselves in a situation in which they became targets of this increasing hatred. A third concern was the insecurity caused by being mired in inter-Muslim conflict, such as that between the Loyalists and the Turkish National Movement. The Armenians of Sölöz, for instance, were victims of the second and third forms of insecurity: the insecurity spawned by Allied and Greek occupation as well as the insecurity of being caught in the crossfire between Loyalists and Nationalists.

It was against this backdrop that the Ottoman Armenians sought their independence, with the support of the Allied Powers, a transformation in their political position triggered by insecurity. Therefore, in addition to the 'external power' component, I argue that 'insecurity' within the post-genocide context also played a vital role in the formation of the Armenian political position. Armenians in the interior parts of Anatolia were living precariously, located as they were in the midst of two conflict zones, between the Loyalist forces and the Nationalists as well as between the Greeks and Turks. Even though

the Armenians had already lost their property, wealth, and sources of income during the war, they were additionally required to pay taxes to the Nationalist forces or fight on their behalf. For these reasons, as documented in the pages of both Armenian and Ottoman Turkish papers, the Turkish National Movement was perceived as the CUP's continuation in the eyes of the Ottoman Armenian community.

3 *The French Occupation in Cilicia and the Turkish–Armenian War in the Caucasus*

As argued in the first chapter, the majority of Ottoman Armenians united around the idea of independence, showing their collective support for the Armenian envoys to the Paris Peace Conference in 1919. This united political goal can be seen in public gatherings, newspaper publications, and statements from the community leadership. A high level of participation and attendance from the community at public gatherings and celebrations such as the Vartanants Feast, assembling for the arrival of Patriarch Zaven, and festivities honouring Boghos Nubar and Woodrow Wilson all signal the Armenians' political stance. In addition, the extent of the publication of maps and editorials about the 'United Armenia' state in the Armenian press lends credence to this argument. Yet, as the second chapter demonstrated, precarity and the risk of violence remained ever present in the community's daily life, especially for those who lived in the cities and towns of inner Anatolia.

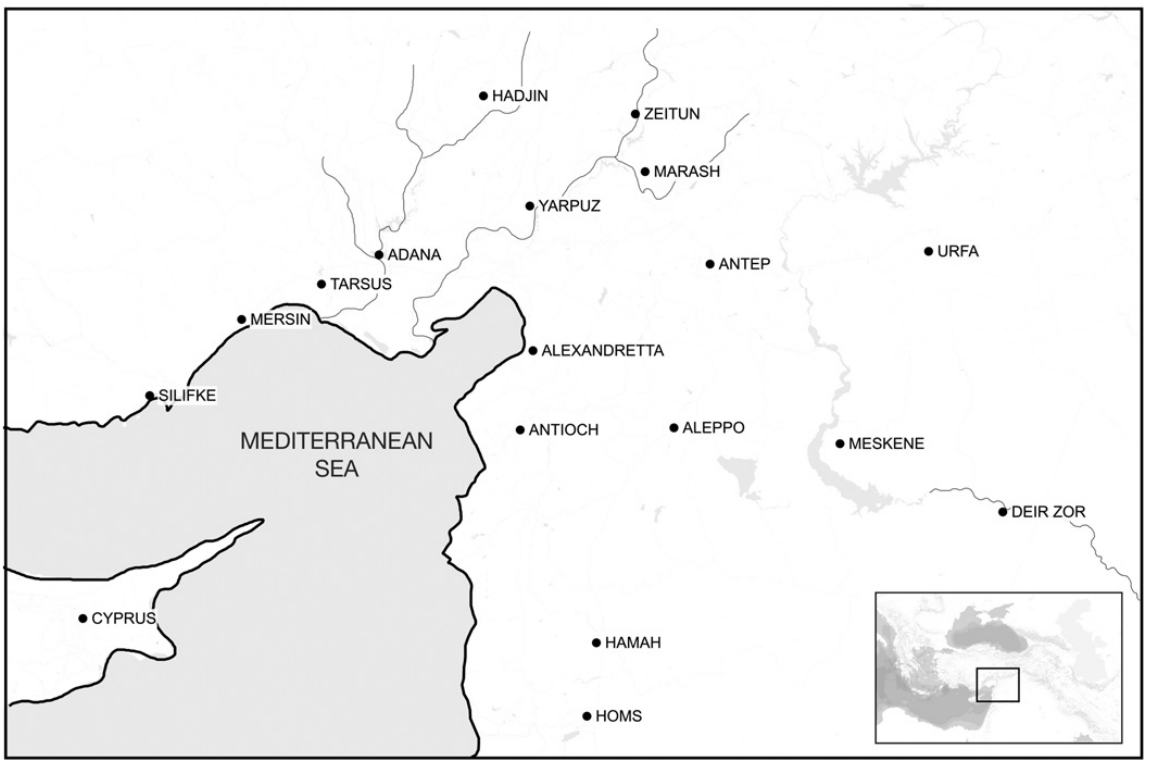
This chapter will focus on two important episodes that took place during the Armistice years. The first is the occupation of Cilicia by French forces and the second is the Turkish–Armenian war in the Caucasus. These episodes are illustrative of the Ottoman Armenians' pro-Armenian independence approach during the first half of the Armistice period. In the Cilicia case, the local struggle of Cilician Armenians against the Nationalist forces and their close relations with the French are examples of the community's pro-independence stance. The first part of this chapter will explicate this stance through the lens of wider geopolitical developments as well as the clashes on the ground. The second part of the chapter will focus on the Turkish–Armenian War in the Caucasus and the humanitarian relief activities of Armenians in Istanbul in order to demonstrate how the community, inspired by the promises of self-determination, was sympathetic towards the Armenian state. I argue that the active participation of Ottoman Armenians in donation campaigns for the Republic of Armenia evidences their pro-independence feelings.

The French Occupation in Cilicia

Cilicia, extending from the Taurus mountains in the west to the Anti-Taurus mountains and the Amanus in the east, is a coastal region of Anatolia which is divided into two parts. The western plain, fed by the Seyhan and Ceyhan rivers – known in Turkey today as the Çukurova Bölgesi (Çukurova region) – is fertile, while the eastern plain is rocky and mountainous, unsuitable for agricultural activities. Cilicia (see Map 3.1) has been an important centre for the Armenian population of Anatolia throughout the centuries. The Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia (1198–1375) ruled the region for two centuries until it was defeated by the Mamluks in the fourteenth century. Ottoman rule followed in the fifteenth century, during which time the Armenian population steadily grew and came to control commerce and industry in the region. Before the beginning of World War I in 1914, the total population in the region was around 406,000, including more than 83,000 Armenians.[1] According to agreements made during the war, the Cilicia region was specified as a future French zone of influence, and after the Ottoman defeat and signing of the Armistice of Mudros, French and British forces occupied certain cities in the region, such as Adana, Antep, and Urfa.

The French occupation of Cilicia represented a unique opportunity for the Ottoman Armenian community. The aspirations of the Cilician Armenians – most of whom were deported to Syrian deserts during the war, with many of their compatriots dying en route – were different from those of the Ottoman Armenians of Istanbul and Izmir, who had not suffered large-scale deportations. The deaths, famine, and the fury of genocidal violence experienced during the deportations influenced

[1] Raymond Kevorkian and Paul Paboudjian, *1915 Öncesinde Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Ermeniler* [Armenians in the Ottoman Empire Before 1915] (Istanbul: Aras Yayıncılık, 2013), 271. According to Kemal Karpat the Armenian population in the Cilicia region before World War I was around 50,000; *Ottoman Population, 1830–1914: Demographic and Social Characteristics* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1995), 171–3. Vahe Tachjian states that around 100,000 Armenian refugees returned to the Cilicia; see Vahe Tachjian, *La France en Cilicie et en Haute-Mezopotamie: Aux confins de la Turquie, de la Syrie et de l'Iraq, 1919–1933* (Paris: Karthala, 2004), 63–4; Vahe Tachjian, 'Du rapatriement en Cilicie au nouvel exode vers la Syrie et le Liban', in *Les Arméniens, 1917–1939: La quête d'un refuge*, Raymond Kevorkian, Levon Nordiguian, and Vahe Tachjian, eds. (Paris: Réunion des musées nationaux, 2007), 40–53.



Map 3.1 The Cilicia region

the motivation of Cilician Armenians who, with the help of the French authorities, began returning to their native lands during the last months of 1918 and the beginning of 1919. Grateful for this Allied support, Cilician Armenians, like other Armenian communities in the Ottoman Empire, were pro-Entente and supporters of the establishment of a 'United Armenia'.

In 1916, the Armenian community leadership in Egypt chose to back the French and British forces in their endeavour to occupy the Ottoman Empire's Arab lands by establishing Armenian volunteer units to serve in the Entente's occupation forces. Prominent figures in Egypt's Armenian political parties – Sdepan Sabah-Kiwlyan (Hnchag Party), Ardawazt Hanměyan (ARF), and Mihran Damadyan (Veragazmyal Hnchag Party) – founded the Armenian Legion in Cyprus alongside genocide survivors in 1916 and called on able-bodied Armenian men in the diaspora to join the units. Young men from the United States and Egypt, in particular, set out for the camps, where they received military training.[2] The bulk of the Armenian Legion was composed of Armenians originating from Musa Dagh in Antioch. The French authorities assured the Armenians that the Legion would be the core of the Armenian state's military, which they promised was to be established in Cilicia.[3] Even though Boghos Nubar expressed reluctance regarding the establishment of the Armenian Legion, the Armenian political parties in Egypt nonetheless decided to continue registering volunteers.[4] When the Armenian National Union (ANU) of Egypt[5]

[2] Andrekos Varnava, 'French and British Post-War Imperial Agendas and Forging an Armenian Homeland after the Genocide: The Formation of the Légion d'Orient in October 1916', *The Historical Journal* (57)4 (2014), 1117–22; Hrant Kankruni, Կիլիկիոյ Հայութեան Վերջին Գաղթը (Giligioy Hayutyan Verchin Kaghtě) [The Last Migration of Cilician Armenians] (Beirut: A.H., 1998), 98; Avedis Yapujyan, Հայ Ժողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մեջ *1919–1921* ԹԹ. (Hay Zhoghovurtin Angakhutyan Baykarě Giligioy Mech 1919–1921) [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian People in Cilicia 1919–1921] (Cairo: Hay Azkayin Himnatram, 1977), 113.

[3] Varnava, 'French and British Post-War Imperial Agendas', 1117–22; Yapujyan, Հայ Ժողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մեջ [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian People in Cilicia], 104.

[4] Yapujyan, Հայ Ժողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մեջ [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian People in Cilicia], 136–7; Varnava, 'French and British Post-War Imperial Agendas', 1113–14.

[5] The Armenian National Union (ANU) was founded in early 1917 in Egypt to bring together various Armenian organisations and political parties to produce common strategies before the political developments. The Cilicia branch of the

Figure 3.1 French Armenian legionnaires take a break by making music in the field, *c.*1920
Project SAVE Armenian Photograph Archives courtesy of Ed Patapanian

issued a public statement, signed by the Armenian political parties, to encourage volunteers to register, the call was answered by 600 Armenians from Musa Dagh, 300 Armenians from Egypt, and 250 Armenian soldiers who had been serving in the Ottoman military when taken as prisoners of war by the British army on the Palestinian front.[6]

ANU was established with the participation of the representatives of the four political parties and three Armenian religious denominations in Cilicia. The ANU functioned as a central administration of the Armenian community of Cilicia before the Allied authorities. It had branches in several towns in the Cilicia regions such as Mersin, Tarsus, Dörtyol, Osmaniye, Maraş, and Urfa, and it had subcommittees for property and finance management of the community, as well as the repatriation of refugees. See Garabet K. Moumdjian, 'Cilicia under French Administration: Armenian Aspirations, Turkish Resistance, and French Strategems', in *Armenian Cilicia*, Richard Hovannisian and Simon Payaslian, eds. (Costa Meza, CA: Mazda Publishers, 2008), 477–80; Vahe Tachjian, 'The Cilician Armenians and French Policy 1919–1921', in *Armenian Cilicia*, Richard Hovannisian and Simon Payaslian, eds. (Costa Meza, CA: Mazda Publishers, 2008), 542; Susan Paul Pattie, *The Armenian Legionnaires: Sacrifice and Betrayal in World War I* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2018), 48–9.

[6] Yapujyan, Հայ Ժողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մէջ [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian People in Cilicia], 148–9; Pattie, *The Armenian Legionnaires*, 48–9.

These new volunteer recruits did not conform to a single profile. Some were young (sixteen years of age), some were old (fifty years of age), some were bookish college graduates while others had served for years in the United States Army. Regardless of background, all were admitted to the Armenian Legion as privates, the lowest military rank.[7]

Most of these Armenian volunteers came to the Legion having lost their families, friends, relatives, and all their possessions during the genocide, galvanising their drive for vengeance.[8] Thus, the insecurity which prevailed from the beginning of the war shaped their political stance. When they saw 'external support' – in this case, the French occupation forces – they made the decision to volunteer in the Legion to fight for independence in the region, as promised by the French authorities. Similar to the other Armenians in the Empire, the Armenians in Cilicia overwhelmingly embraced a pro-Allied and pro-independence position in the first years of the Armistice period.

When the French forces, along with the Armenian Legion, landed in Cilicia in late 1918, local Armenians poured into the streets, in festive spirits.[9] Clearly, from the very beginning of the French occupation, the majority of local Armenians demonstrated their rejection of Ottoman authority by celebrating the French administration's arrival.

A group of Armenian legionnaires disembarked at Mersin on 19 November 1918 and occupied Adana, Pozantı, and Tarsus, while another group landed in Iskenderun on 22 November and

[7] Pattie, *The Armenian Legionnaires*, 68–9.

[8] Sh. T. Torosyan, Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները *1919–1920* թթ (Kilikiayi Hayeri Azatagrakan Sharzhumnerě 1919–1920 TT.) [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians 1919–1920] (Yerevan: Yerevani Hamalsarani Hratarakchutyun, 1987), 116–17; Yapujyan, Հայ Ժողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մեջ [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian People in Cilicia], 195.

In some cases, the Armenian legionnaires were involved in conflicts with the French soldiers of Algerian and Senegalese origin and local Muslim communities. See Nazar Bağcı, 'An Analysis of Inter-Communal Conflicts in Cilicia during the Independence War Years 1918–1922' (MA thesis, Boğaziçi University, 2013), 6.

[9] Richard G. Hovannisian, 'The Postwar Contest for Cilicia and the "Marash Affair"', in *Armenian Cilicia*, Richard Hovannisian and Simon Payaslian, eds. (Costa Meza, CA: Mazda Publishers, 2008), 500; Pattie, *The Armenian Legionnaires*, 125–8; Dikran Boyadjian, *Haygagan Lekeone: Badmagan Hushakrutiun* [The Armenian Legion: A Historical Memoir] (Watertown: Baykar Printing, 1965), 178–82.

Figure 3.2 Celebration of the French National Day (*Verchin Lur*, 14 July 1921) Courtesy of the National Library of Armenia

occupied Islahiye, Dörtyol, Cebel-i Bereket, and Bahçe.[10] Toros Lusinyan, who served in the Armenian Legion, described the

[10] Yapujyan, Հայ Ժողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մէջ [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian People in Cilicia], 187; Cemil Şenalp, *Ulusal Kurtuluş Savaşında Fransız İşgal Bölgelerinde Sivil İşler ve Askeri Hükümet Faaliyetleri* [Civil Affairs and Military Government Activities in the French-Occupied Regions during the National War of Independence] (Istanbul: Harp Akademileri Komutanlığı Yayınları, 2006), 155.

enthusiasm of the local Armenians when the legionnaires landed in Mersin:

> The station was packed with waves of people of different genders and ages. My pen cannot describe the scene which appeared before our yearnful eyes, nor could the famous authors manage to do that. Along with endless clapping, thousands of mouths were shouting together: 'Long live Armenia, long live the Armenian soldier, long live the Entente!'[11]

Varteres Garougian, an Armenian American volunteer in the Legion who disembarked at Mersin in 1918, encapsulates the emotional experience of many volunteers:

> After all that had happened to us during the past several years, we were finally in our homeland, lined up in the modern custom house. However, our men were excited, acting like enraged tigers roaring to pounce on any Turks in sight as if to eat them alive. Our officers were warning us to remain calm, to avoid bloodshed since the Armistice was now in effect. They reminded us that the Turkish Government had surrendered unconditionally, that we must wait for the decisions of the peacemakers. But to whom do you direct these logical arguments? All of the soldiers had members of their family whom this Ottoman Government had commanded to be murdered – father, mother, brother, sister, wife, children, relations, an entire nation. The Armenian legionnaire's pent up rage and frustration could no longer be contained. 'Revenge, Revenge!' was the outcry.[12]

When Colonel Raymond's unit took control of Adana on 21 December 1918, the bells of the churches rang continuously, and the Armenian shops in the market were decorated with Armenian and Allied flags. Armenian youth organised a torchlight procession during the first night of the occupation.[13] Armenians of Urfa, similar to the Armenians of Adana, rushed into the streets to welcome the French forces, which consisted of 400 Armenian legionnaires and 150 Algerians.[14]

[11] Yapujyan, Հայ Ժողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մեջ [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian People in Cilicia], 188.

[12] Quoted in Lerna Ekmekçioğlu, *Recovering Armenia: The Limits of Belonging in Post-Genocide Turkey* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2016), 178.

[13] Kemal Çelik, *Milli Mücadelede Adana ve Havalisi 1918–1922* [Adana and Its Vicinity during the National Struggle] (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1999), 60.

[14] Yapujyan, Հայ Ժողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մեջ [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian People in Cilicia], 478–9.

Despite the enthusiasm of the Armenians for the French, their interests and those of the occupying power did not align. Though the French assumed control of the Cilicia region and Syria under the Sykes-Picot Agreement, they intended to prevent the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire, fearing that French companies would lose their shares in the Ottoman railway.[15] The French government anticipated that it would face difficulties in collecting its debts from the Ottoman government because the administration of the Düyun-u Umumiye (Ottoman Public Debt Administration) would fall into new hands.[16] At the beginning of the war, French capital investments constituted 60.08 per cent of the total capital investments within the Ottoman Empire, whereas the German and British capital investments were 25.42 per cent and 14.46 per cent, respectively.[17] Motivated by self-interest, the French authorities were reluctant to raise the number of Armenian volunteers in the Armenian Legion to 10,000, as they theorised that increasing the number of legionnaires might result in the separation of Cilicia from the remaining Ottoman territory, leading to the disintegration of the Empire and the ensuing loss of French investments.[18] Furthermore, French agents aggressively collected the weapons of Armenians to undermine any self-defence activities that could lead to a push for Armenian independence in the region.[19] The editorials of *Hay Tsayn* highlighted that it was the policy of France to

[15] The Sykes-Picot Agreement was a secret agreement made in 1916 between the British Empire and France to define their spheres of influence and colonial domination in Asia Minor and Mesopotamia. According to this agreement, the Cilicia region (including Maraş, Antep, and Urfa) was under French authority. See Eugene Rogan, *The Fall of the Ottomans: The Great War in the Middle East* (New York: Basic Books, 2016), 285–7; David Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace: Creating the Modern Middle East, 1914–1922* (London: Penguin, 1991), 285–9.

[16] Bige Yavuz, *Kurtuluş Savaşı Döneminde Türk-Fransız İlişkileri (Fransız Arşiv Belgeleri Açısından) 1919–1922* [French-Turkish Relations during the War of Independence According to French Archival Documents] (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1994), 31.

[17] Ibid., 81; Eliot Grinnell Mears, *Modern Turkey: A Politico-Economic Interpretation, 1908–1933 Inclusive, with Selected Chapters by Representative Authorities* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1924), 356–8.

[18] *Hay Tsayn*, Զինադադարը Եւ Անոր Հաւանական Հետեւանքները (Zinatatarě Ev Anor Havanagan Hedevanknerě) [The Armistice and Its Possible Consequences], 4 June 1920, no. 343; Yapujyan, Հայ Ժողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մէջ [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian People in Cilicia], 406–7; Pattie, *The Armenian Legionnaires*, 38–9.

[19] Ibid., 211.

support the unity of the Ottoman state to protect its economic interests and relationships. Recognising that Mustafa Kemal's movement was the most powerful political development in Anatolia, French authorities adapted their policy to find more common ground with the Turkish National Movement.[20]

In theory, supporting the Ottoman state's territorial integrity did not influence the French authorities' support for returning the Armenian deportees to their native lands. By supporting deportees in returning home, the French administration aimed to establish a balance in the region between the Muslim and Christian populations, thus benefiting from the Armenians' return. The return, administrators were convinced, would minimise the burden on the French security forces, who were in conflict with certain Muslim groups protesting the occupation. The French government spent four million francs on the construction of camps consisting of small cottages for Armenians who were returning to their native lands. Even as the Ottoman government announced on 18 December 1918 that the return of the Armenian deportees would be financed with state funding, it neither organised transportation nor provided any accommodation, a critical need as the majority of properties belonging to the Armenian deportees had been allocated to Muslim refugees who were resettled in the Cilicia region during wartime.[21] The French administration saw no alternative but to build camps to accommodate the Armenian returnees. The camp under the supervision of High Commissioner Henri Gouraud and French diplomat François Georges-Picot, for example, housed more than 8,000 people.[22] The rest of the deportees who arrived in November and December of 1919 were accommodated in other camps.[23]

[20] *Hay Tsayn*, Զինադադարը Եւ Անոր Հաւանական Հետեւանքները (Zinatatarě Ew Anor Havanagan Hedevanknerě) [Armistice and Its Possible Consequences], 4 June 1920, no. 343.

[21] For the order of the Ottoman government, see Vahram Shemmassian, 'The Repatriation of Armenian Refugees from the Arab Middle East, 1918–1920', in *Armenian Cilicia*, Richard Hovannisian and Simon Payaslian, eds. (Costa Meza, CA: Mazda Publishers, 2008), 425 and 432; Moumdjian, 'Cilicia under French Administration', 465.

[22] E. Bremon, Կիլիկիա *1919-1920*'ին (Giligia 1919-1920'in) [Cilicia in 1919–1920], Dikran Boyajyan, trans. (Boston: Bahag, 1921), 20; Moumdjian, 'Cilicia under French Administration', 460.

[23] Yapujyan, Հայ Ժողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մէջ [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian People in Cilicia], 261; Shemmassian, 'The Repatriation of Armenian Refugees', 451.

Moreover, the French administration in Cilicia spent more than 400,000 Ottoman liras following the return of the Armenian refugees between 1918 and 1919. At the end of 1919, 60,000 Armenians had returned to the Cilicia region, bringing the total number of Armenians in the region to approximately 120,000, including 10,000 orphans.[24]

With the help of French officers, thousands of Armenians were able to find the necessary means of transportation to return from the Syrian provinces to their native lands. The authorities transferred the Armenian deportees either by vessel to the Mersin or Antioch harbours or by train, following the Damascus–Aleppo–Adana route or the Ras al-Ayn–Aleppo–Adana route. French officers organised the return of the Armenian deportees in collaboration with Armenian relief societies. The French officers in Aleppo, along with Dr Louis Rolland[25] and Captain Jim Chankalian[26] in Adana, worked together to secure train coaches. Rolland, in particular, worked assiduously for the return of the deportees, as Dikran Boyajyan, who collaborated with him, writes in his memoir: 'Each time a train arrival was reported by the officials, night or noon, he ran to the station in order to carry out the evacuation of the train coaches. He pulled off the babies to lighten the mother's burden or helped an old Armenian woman to get out of the coach.'[27]

For the French, Cilicia would be transformed into a buffer zone between Anatolian Muslims and the Muslims of the Levant,

[24] *Jagadamard*, Կիլիկիան 1919Էն 1920 (Giligian 1919'en 1920) [Cilicia from 1919 to 1920], 12 August 1921, no. 2653. Vahram Shemmassian notes that in July 1919 there were 74,431 repatriated Armenians in Cilicia and 72,495 Armenians waiting in Mesopotamia, Syria, and Lebanon to be repatriated. See Shemmassian, 'The Repatriation of Armenian Refugees', 440. Garabet Moumdjian, on the other hand, gives the number of repatriated Armenians from January to June 1919 as somewhere between 106,500 and 109,500. See Moumdjian, 'Cilicia under French Administration', 461. According to Vahe Tachjian, by 1920, around 100,000 Armenians had been repatriated to Cilicia, the Eastern Territories and Asia Minor. See Tachjian, 'The Cilician Armenians and French Policy', 543.

[25] Dr (Major) Louis Rolland was a French officer who served in the French occupation forces as a physician.

[26] Captain Jim (Bedros) Chankalian, who was born in Diyarbakir and immigrated to the United States at a young age, was an Armenian who served in the United States Army as an officer. Following his resignation from the military, he participated in the armed struggle of the Armenians during the war in Van and the Caucasus. He was a prominent leader of the Armenian legionnaires who participated in the French campaigns.

[27] Torosyan, Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians], 84.

particularly Syria and Greater Lebanon, where the French embarked upon the mandate plan. To engineer the region for their imperialist goals, they decided to militarily occupy the major cities and facilitate the return of Armenian survivors to recreate the pre-war demographic balance between Muslims and non-Muslims. The French government assigned Colonel Edouard Bremond as the governor of Armenia on 25 December 1918, but on 19 January 1919 his title was changed to that of 'Chief Administrator of Northern Territories Occupied by the Entente', so as to not provoke the ire of local Muslims.[28] In February and March of 1919, the British and French governments agreed on the withdrawal of British forces and the entrance of French troops into the region. The first French units, consisting of two African brigades, entered Adana on 9 June 1919 and were joined by two other brigades from the 412th division on 12 July. The British forces completely evacuated the region by the end of October 1919.[29]

However, from the beginning of the occupation, the French administration was besieged with problems with regard to management, communication, and military discipline. There were only 20,000 soldiers under French command to maintain order in the entire Cilicia region at the end of 1919.[30] Furthermore, Nationalist propaganda disseminated by Mustafa Kemal's agents was highly effective in the region in recruiting the local Muslim population to the Nationalist cause. The difficulties were compounded by the communication issues faced by the French administration. For example, there was no line of communication between the French military officers, so French lieutenants in Hadjin (Haçin) and Antep (Aintab) were not able to receive instructions and orders from the headquarters in Adana.[31] Although the French authorities used reconnaissance aircraft to establish communication between

[28] Bremon, Կիլիկիա *1919–1920*'ին [Cilicia in 1919–1920], 15; Sam Kaplan, 'Territorializing Armenians: Geo-Texts, and Political Imaginaries in French-Occupied Cilicia, 1919–1922', *History and Anthropology* 15 (2004), 412; Pars Tuğlacı, *Tarih Boyunca Batı Ermenileri 1891–1922* (Istanbul: Pars Yayın, 2004), 730.

[29] Torosyan, Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians], 82.

[30] Robert F. Zeidner, *The Tricolor over the Taurus 1918–1922* (Ankara: Turkish Historical Society, 2005), 137.

[31] Bremon, Կիլիկիա *1919–1920*'ին [Cilicia in 1919–1920], 54; Hovannisian, 'The Postwar Contest', 500–501.

the central and remote areas of the region, a one-hour flight would cost 10,000 francs and sending reports to Beirut by air would cost 60,000 francs. With an aircraft unable to fly more than four hours without refuelling and maintenance, communication by aircraft was simply not a viable option.[32]

There was a shared understanding among the Cilician Armenian community that the primary target of the Turkish National Movement was not the Allied Powers but the Armenians, whom they viewed as an existential threat in Anatolia.[33] At the end of 1919, when the Turkish National Movement began to expand rapidly in the region, Armenian community representatives demanded that the French administration arrest the former CUP leaders and the current Nationalist leaders, and completely disarm the Turkish population, as stated in the Armistice of Mudros. Additionally, Armenians asked for the creation of Armenian volunteer units to defend their population against the Nationalist forces.[34] Contrary to the Armistice articles, the Ottoman officers had not implemented the disarmament process of the troops, and the armouries were emptied into the local Muslims' hands. In Cilicia, for instance, Bremond commented that the Turkish community had 25,000 guns.[35]

As for the Turkish National Movement, on 30 October 1919, following the Sivas Congress, the Representation Committee assigned Major Kemal (Kozanoğlu Doğan Bey) to the commandership of the Cilicia Kuva-yi Milliye (Nationalist forces), Lieutenant Salim (Yörük Salim Bey) and Lieutenant Asaf Bey (Kılıç Ali) to the commandership of the Maraş Kuva-yi Milliye forces, and Lieutenant Ragıp (Tekelioğlu Sinan Bey) to the commandership of the Adana Kuva-yi Milliye forces.[36] Kılıç Ali, who was active in Maraş (Marash) and Antep, was

[32] S. Sahakyan and S. Muradyan trans., Աբբա Շապեռոնի Օրագիրը (Abba Shaperoni Orakirě) [The Diary of Abbé Chaperon] (Yerevan: Hayots Tseghaspanutyan Tangaran, 2002), 27; Hovannisian, 'The Postwar Contest', 500–501.

[33] *Giligia*, Քէմալականները Եւ Քրիստոնեաները (Kemalagannerě Ew Krisdonyanerě) [Nationalists and Armenians], 15 October 1920, no. 442.

[34] Yapujyan, Հայ Ժողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մէջ [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian People in Cilicia], 340–1.

[35] Torosyan, Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians], 109.

[36] Yavuz, *Kurtuluş Savaşı Döneminde Türk-Fransız İlişkileri* [French-Turkish Relations during the War of Independence], 57.

instructed by the Ankara government to organise armed volunteer groups in the region to fight against the French forces. While the arming of the Maraş Muslim population ceased in the autumn of 1919, the Armenian community continued to take necessary measures for self-defence in case of an attack.[37]

Even though the French encouraged the establishment of Armenian Legions, they did not work in complete co-operation with them. In some cases, the Armenian legionnaires clashed with the French military officers.[38] For instance, some of the Armenian legionnaires argued that the French policy in Cilicia was pro-Turkish, leading them to refuse to defend France's interests in the region. Instead, they took to the hills and plundered neighbouring Turkish villages.[39] On 16 February 1919, an incident occurred between a group of Armenian legionnaires and French soldiers of Algerian origin.[40] When the Armenian legionnaires began singing in Armenian in a coffeehouse, the Algerian soldiers demanded that they instead sing in Arabic. The Armenian legionnaires continued to sing in Armenian, at which point the soldiers attacked the musicians, silenced the music, and hid outside the building. The Armenian legionnaires then went outside, started firing, and killed two Algerian soldiers. During the gunfire, Armenian legionnaires were fired upon from a nearby house of a Muslim. They entered the property and razed the house to the ground. At this point, the French authorities demanded that the Armenian legionnaires surrender their weapons, a request that was denied. The Armenian legionnaires declared that, since Algerian soldiers were armed, they too would remain armed. Upon hearing this, the French authorities ordered the Algerian soldiers to open fire. Thirteen Armenian legionnaires were killed, and seven were arrested and eventually sentenced to fifteen years in prison.[41]

[37] Torosyan, Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians], 146–7.

[38] *Jagadamard*, Կիլիկիան 1919Էն 1920 (Giligian 1919'en 1920) [Cilicia from 1919 to 1920], 13 August 1921, no. 2664.

[39] Torosyan, Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians], 116–17.

[40] Yapujyan, Հայ Ժողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մեջ [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian People in Cilicia], 195; Moumdjian, 'Cilicia under French Administration', 466–7.

[41] Torosyan, Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians], 118–19; Pattie, *The Armenian*

On 19 February 1919, the War Committee decided to dissolve the Armenian Legions. The three Legions thereafter were deployed in major towns along the railway such as Mersin, Tarsus, and Adana; the fourth Legion was sent to Port Said on 1 March.[42] Despite the French authorities' pledge that the Armenian Legion would be the core of the Armenian state to be established in Cilicia, this episode raised the suspicion among Armenians that the French policies in Cilicia were not in fact as pro-Armenian as they were professed to be.

First Blow: The Retreat from Maraş (Marash)

Following the Sivas Congress and the establishment of Nationalist units in the region, clashes between the Nationalist and French forces spread to the various districts of Cilicia. The first incident was the Nationalist forces' retaking of Maraş, during which the French authorities made clear that they would abandon the region to the Turks without resistance.

In Maraş, under the leadership of former Ottoman army officer Setrag Kherlakyan, together with Sarkis Markaryan, Aram Samuelyan, and Baghdasar Otabalyan, the Armenians established emplacements in Saint Asdvadzadzin, Holy Karasun Mangants, Saint Sarkis, the Latin monastery of Santa Terra, Kuyucak, Şekerdere, Kümbet, and Beyt Şalum for the defence of the city.[43]

Circumventing French forces that were lacking in numbers and weaponry, Nationalist forces attacked the city with both their regular army and various bandit groups. In the ensuing clashes, Nationalist forces targeted the civilian Armenian population of Maraş. It was reported that, though the Armenians in the Kümbet and Kurucak neighbourhoods defended themselves against the attacks, the majority of Armenians throughout the city were unable to do so. The Armenians' capacity for collective self-defence was greatly limited

Legionnaires, 130–3; Boyadjian, *Haygakan Lekeone* [The Armenian Legion], 193–7.

42 Çiçek, *Milli Mücadelede Adana ve Havalisi 1918–1922* [Adana and Its Vicinity during the National Struggle], 75.

43 Ibid., 486; Ruben Gasparyan, Հայկական Կոտորածները Կիլիկիայում (Haykakan Kotoratsnerě Kilikiayum) [The Armenian Massacres in Cilicia] (Yerevan: HH GAA Gitutyan Hradrakchutyun, 2005), 172; Stanley E. Kerr, *The Lions of Marash: Personal Experiences with American Near East Relief, 1919–1922* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1973), 129.

because the Armenian quarters were disconnected from each other, with Turkish quarters in between.[44] Soon after the first attacks, Armenians decided to gather at central monasteries to stage an armed opposition to the Nationalist forces. Saint Kevork, Saint Sarkis, Saint Asdvadzadzin, Holy Karasun Mangants, the Armenian Catholic Church, and the Latin monastery of Santa Terra became the self-defence centres. By 24 January, the Armenian quarters of Maraş were under full attack. Saint Asdvadzadzin Church, where around 2,000 Armenians were sheltered and which was defended by twenty Armenian legionnaires, was the first location from which Armenians had to evacuate. The Armenians sheltering there attempted to reach Holy Karasun Mangants Church at night; however, Algerian and Senegalese soldiers opened fire on them, mistakenly believing them to be armed Turkish groups.[45] The French were unable to rein in their troops, mainly due to the communication problems previously mentioned. Thus, while the French command sent two reconnaissance aircraft to investigate the situation in Maraş, the aircraft returned to Adana with insufficient intelligence, and the French were left without an accurate understanding of the events unfolding on the ground.[46] As for the shootings committed by the French soldiers of Algerian and Senegalese origin, these were found to be impulsive acts from undisciplined individuals.[47] In one case, according to eyewitness accounts, a French soldier opened fire upon Armenian villagers, despite their cries of 'Arménien, Arménien!' as they approached, clearly identifying themselves.[48]

[44] *Giligia*, Հայերու Կացութիւնը Մարաշի Մէջ (Hayeru Gatsutiwnĕ Marashi Mech) [The Situation of Armenians in Maraş], 3 October 1920, no. 435.

The Armenian community was living in separate parts of the city, such as the German orphanage and a few surrounding buildings, the Catholic church, the Central school and a few surrounding buildings, the American establishments, and the German hospital.

[45] *Verchin Lur*, Գաւառի Ջարդը (Kavari Chartĕ) [The Slaughter of a Province], 28 February 1920, no. 1812; Torosyan, Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians], 149–57.

[46] Է.Պրէմօն, Կիլիկիա *1919–1920*'ին [Cilicia in 1919–1920], trans. Պօյաճեան Տիգրան (Boston: Bahag, 1921), 72–3; Hovannisian, 'The Postwar Contest', 505.

[47] *Verchin Lur*, Գաւառի Ջարդը (Kavari Chartĕ) [The Slaughter of a Province], 28 February 1920, no. 1812.

[48] Ibid.; Yapujyan, Հայ Ժողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մէջ [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian People in Cilicia], 519; Tachjian,

After facing the Nationalist forces' attacks, French soldiers were instructed to abandon the city at midnight, without giving notice to the Armenian community. French forces eventually claimed that it was not a retreat but a strategic move organised to ensure a new offensive against the Nationalists. Indeed, Maraş, Antep, and Kilis were located in remote parts of the occupation zone and, according to the French authorities, the retreat from these regions was due to a shortage in food and ammunition, which had rendered the troops unable to fight effectively. While the decision to retreat could be considered strategically sound, the French forces' failure to communicate this to the Armenians resulted in a panic. Prominent Armenian community members appealed to the French commander for information about the rumours of retreat. The French commander did not respond at first but, following the second appeal, he assured them that the necessary steps would be taken to protect the Armenian population.[49] *Giligia* reported that French soldiers had already begun destroying the heavy weapons, which they would not be able to transport readily.[50] On 10 February, French forces set the garrison alight and left the town and its few thousand Armenians behind.[51] Even though French soldiers informed Armenians that if any of them were to follow the French troops, they would be shot, thousands of Armenians still did. As the French forces were preparing to depart from the region, 4,000 Armenians who had been sheltered in the Latin monastery began to gather nearby. In the end, French officers allowed the Armenian deportees – between 3,200 and 3,400 in total – to trail them from a distance of one kilometre.[52]

La France en Cilicie et en Haute-Mezopotamie, 347; Kerr, *The Lions of Marash*, 153.

49 *Giligia*, Ֆրանսական Զինուորներու Նահանջը (Fransagan Zinuorneru Nahanchě) [The Retreat of French Soldiers], 27 February 1920, no. 265.

50 Ibid.; Hovannisian, 'The Postwar Contest', 511; Kerr, *The Lions of Marash*, 162.

51 *Giligia*, Ֆրանսական Զինուորներու Նահանջը (Fransagan Zinuorneru Nahanchě) [The Retreat of French Soldiers], 27 February 1920, no. 265; Hovannisian, 'The Postwar Contest', 511; A. Vache, Ինչպէս Կորսնցուցինք Կիլիկիան: Հերոսամարտներ (Inchbes Gorsntsutsink Giligian: Herosamardner) [How We Lost Cilicia: Heroic Battles] (Beirut: Sevan Printing, 1971), 39.

52 *Giligia*, Ֆրանսական Զինուորներու Նահանջը (Fransagan Zinuorneru Nahanchě) [The Retreat of French Soldiers], 27 February 1920, no. 265; *Horizon*, 26 February 1920, no. 202; Yapujyan, Հայ Ժողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մեջ [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian People in Cilicia], 536.

Thousands of Armenian women, children, and the elderly who were afraid of a possible massacre took to the road behind the French forces, begging the French not to leave them behind.[53] Only about 1,500 to 2,000 survived, with the rest perishing on the road.[54] Another group of Armenians fleeing from Maraş was attacked by bands on the road to Islahiye.[55] The retreat took place during a severe snowstorm and hundreds of Armenians who could not find the necessary warm clothing for the journey froze to death.[56] Gaspar Menag, a member of the Armenian Legion, described the retreat scene in his memoir:

> Soon after people begin to fall, gradually in larger numbers, and start to be buried under the snow . . . Impossible to proceed. A few surviving horses and mules try to pave the way and a few thousand people follow these animals, through their footprints . . . The snow falls cruelly; our fingers start to blacken. At each step, someone falls into the snow silently and mystically.[57]

According to reports, 2,000 Armenians eventually managed to reach Islahiye.[58] After the clashes, only 8,000 Armenians were left in Maraş from 20,000 who had previously lived in the city.[59] A subsequent editorial in *Giligia*, entitled 'To Be or Not to Be, That Is the Question', declared: 'In response to this situation, the Armenian people should prove that it is not possible to annihilate their centuries-long existence in two seconds. Armenians should work with all of their

[53] Torosyan, Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians], 161; Zhorzh Budier, Նօթեր Սուրիա-Կիլիկիա Ռազմական Գործողութեան Մասին (Noter Suria-Giligia Razmagan Kordzoghutyan Masin) [Notes About Military Operations in Syria-Cilicia] (Beirut: Zartonk, 1984), 7–12.

[54] *Verchin Lur*, Գաւառի Ջարդը (Kavari Chartě) [Province's Slaughter], 28 February 1920, no. 1812; Hovannisian, 'The Postwar Contest', 511.

[55] *Horizon*, Կացութիւնը Վերին Կիլիկիոյ Մէջ (Gatsutiwně Verin Giligioy Mech) [The Situation in Upper Cilicia], 26 February 1920, no. 202.

[56] Krikor H. Kalousdian, *Marash or Kermanig and Heroic Zeytoon* (New York: Union of Marash Armenians, 1934), 808–9.

[57] Torosyan, Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians], 168.

[58] *Giligia,* 2,000 Փախստական Հայեր Իսլահի (2,000 Pakhsdagan Hayer Islahi) [2,000 Refugee Armenians in Islahiye], 17 February 1920, no. 253; Myure Madern, Մարաշի Կոտորածը (Marashi Godoratsě) [The Marash Massacre], trans. Varuzhan Boghosyan (Yerevan: Hayots Tseghaspanutyan Tangaran, 2001), 24–30; Bağcı, 'An Analysis of Inter-Communal Conflicts', 102.

[59] *Horizon*, Մարաշի Պարենաւորումը (Marashi Barenavorumě) [Victualing of Maraş], 6 March 1920, no. 210. Kalousdian provides the figure of 11,000; see Kalousdian, *Marash or Kermanig and Heroic Zeytoon*, 827.

means and with their resisting strength to tell the large and small nations that Armenians, surrounded by a solid indifference, will fight tooth and nail to protect their existence'.[60]

As the atrocities unfolded in Cilicia after World War I, all the Armenian political parties and the ANU in Adana organised a joint meeting. Mihran Damadyan was assigned as the representative to appeal to the Allied authorities for assistance. The governor of Adana, Celal Bey, offered to initiate a new Turkish–Armenian reconciliation. It was refused by the Armenian authorities, who stated that 'it was not possible to sit down at the table with the Turks' so soon after 'thousands of Armenians were killed in Maraş'.[61]

The Ottoman Turkish press, particularly the pro-Nationalist outlets, denied the factuality of reports of the slaughter of Armenians. During an interview given to the daily *Akşam*, the minister of internal affairs stated that 'according to the news we received from the locals, Maraş is at peace right now'. Similarly, *Yeni Gün* wrote, 'The news regarding the slaughter of 20,000 Armenians in Maraş is unfounded'. Kerovpe Zhamgochyan, an Armenian, criticised the Turkish papers in *Verchin Lur*, describing how the 'peace' in Maraş at that time resulted from 'the Armenian population in the city [having] been annihilated'.[62]

Following the clashes and atrocities in Maraş and the news published in the European press, the Ottoman papers divided into two camps. On the one side were papers such as *Alemdar* and *Peyam-ı Sabah*, which condemned the atrocities inflicted upon the Armenian population. The editors of *Alemdar*, for instance, argued that 'not [the deaths of] 3,000, but the bleeding of the nose of even three Armenians would negatively affect the image of the Ottoman government'. Ali Kemal in *Peyam-ı Sabah*, for example, added that the atrocities of the Turkish National Movement did nothing beneficial for the Ottoman state but in fact denigrated the government's image in the eyes of the Western powers and enhanced the rationalisation of the Greek occupation.[63] On the

[60] *Giligia*, Լինիլ Դէ Չլինիլ Ահա Խնդիրը (Linil Te Chlinil Aha Khntirě) [To Be or Not to Be, That Is the Question], 17 February 1920, no. 258.

[61] *Verchin Lur*, Զարդէրու Առթիւ Ազգային Ձեռնարկներ (Charteru Artiv Azkayin Tsernargner) [National Initiatives Following the Massacres], 2 March 1920, no. 1814.

[62] *Verchin Lur*, Խաղաղութիւն Կը Տիրէ Եղեր (Khaghaghutiwn Gě Dire Yegher) [They Claim There Is Peace], 5 March 1920, no. 1817.

[63] *Peyam-ı Sabah*, 'Yine Kurban Mı Gideceğiz?' [Are We Going to Be Sacrificed Again?], 4 March 1920, no. 455.

other side, papers such as *İkdam* argued that the news regarding the atrocities and massacres was the product of propaganda and did not reflect the truth.[64]

The events in Maraş resulted in the removal of the majority of the Armenian community and the French forces from the city and constituted the first victory of the Nationalist forces in the Cilicia region. The retaking of Maraş by the Nationalists increased the popularity of Mustafa Kemal in the region, as well as increasing the participation of Muslim men in the struggle. Observing these developments, the Armenian community comprehended that they did not hold an indispensable place in the French realpolitik. The pragmatist French administration clearly was reluctant to ensnare itself in the struggle against the Nationalist locals by continuing to occupy Cilicia and protect the Armenian civilians.

Second Blow: The Abandonment of Hadjin (Haçin)

During the first years of the Armistice period, the hills of Hadjin swarmed with armed groups of all ethnic and religious origins, such as Armenian, Kurdish, Cherkes, and Turkish. These armed groups participated in robbery, raids, and plunder.[65] There were no French forces in Hadjin when, at the same time as Nationalist forces surrounded the neighbouring villages of the high-altitude region, Colonel Edouard Bremond denied a request for aid from Armenians in Hadjin. The justification was that French soldiers could not be sent to a place which was remote, mountainous, and far from the military supply network. Armenians in the town, nonetheless, decided to oppose the Nationalist forces themselves and organised a committee for self-defence.[66] Soon after, the committee established a commandership and appointed Sarkis Jebejiyan, an experienced soldier who had fought in the Caucasus, to lead the units. Armenian men from sixteen to forty-five years old were conscripted, with around 600

[64] *Alemdar*, 'Hal ve Mevkii' [Situation and Position], 4 March 1920, no. 2743; *İkdam*, 'Propaganda', 4 March 1920, no. 8284.

[65] Yapujyan, Հայ ժողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մեջ [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian People in Cilicia], 585–7.

[66] *Verchin Lur*, Կիլիկիոյ Կացութիւնը (Giligioy Gatsutiwnĕ) [Cilicia's Situation], 24 September 1920, no. 1988; Torosyan, Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians], 180–1.

men constituting four units in total. Military training commenced, and Armenian orphans were taught how to use basic guns and perform ciphered communication by flags.[67] It was a total mobilisation campaign within the Armenian community of Hadjin to protect themselves against the attacks from Nationalist groups.[68]

On 12 March 1920, the governor of Sis, Captain Taillardat, contacted the governor of Hadjin, Garabed Chalyan, regarding the population of Hadjin, the number of Armenian children, and the measures necessary to transport the population from Hadjin to Sis. Garabed Chalyan responded that, for such a transfer, the armed Armenian volunteers might be able to secure the road from Hadjin to Vahgan. However, the stretch between Vahgan and Sis would require additional support from French forces.[69] Governor Taillardat responded that he would not dedicate even a small unit of French soldiers for the evacuation of Armenian women, children, and the elderly from Hadjin.[70] According to historian Vahe Tachjian, the Hadjin siege occurred at a time when the French authorities were trying to reach an agreement with the Nationalists; thus, they did not want to anger the Turks by aiding the Armenians.[71]

On 13 March 1920, the Hadjin Armenians sent a telegram to the ANU in Adana – including Mihran Damadyan, Archbishop Bedros Sarajyan, and the Armenian papers published in Adana such as *Giligia* and *Hay Tsayn* – announcing that they would not transfer the women, children, and elderly to Sis without safe passage. Instead, they would continue to struggle against the Nationalist forces to the end,

[67] *Verchin Lur*, Կիլիկիոյ Կացութիւնը (Giligioy Gatsutiwnĕ) [Cilicia's Situation], 24 September 1920, no. 1988; Torosyan, Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians], 180–1.

[68] *Verchin Lur*, Կիլիկիոյ Կացութիւնը (Giligioy Gatsutiwnĕ) [Cilicia's Situation], 24 September 1920, no. 1988; Gasparyan, Հայկական Կոտորածները Կիլիկիայում [The Armenian Massacres in Cilicia], 179; Yapujyan, Հայ Ժողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մեջ [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian People in Cilicia], 592; Vache, Ինչպէս Կորսնցուցինք Կիլիկիան: Հերոսամարտներ [How We Lost Cilicia: Heroic Battles], 31–2.

[69] Kankruni, Կիլիկիոյ Հայութեան Վերջին Գաղթը (Giligioy Hayutyan Verchin Kaghtĕ) [The Last Migration of Cilician Armenians], 140–1; Abdurrahman Kütük, 'Kurtuluş Savaşı'nda Yukarı Çukurova' [Upper Çukurova during the War of Independence] (MA thesis, Yüzüncü Yıl Üniversitesi, 2013), 97.

[70] Torosyan, Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians], 188–9.

[71] Tachjian, *La France en Cilicie et en Haute-Mezopotamie*, 136–7.

requesting additional ammunition and weapons from the Union.[72] Otherwise, the telegram noted, 'the blood of Hadjin Armenians would be on their [the Armenian community of Adana] necks'.[73] Upon receiving this telegram from Hadjin, Armenians in Adana organised a public gathering at the church and around 400 Armenian volunteers of Hadjin origin registered to fight with the self-defence units.[74] When assistance was requested from the French authorities, they responded that they could provide 150 bullets and three days of food for each soldier but nothing more.[75] Despite the French authorities' meagre contributions, the newly established volunteer unit still continued to Sis to take control of the roads in the direction of Hadjin. However, the French authorities, especially Captain Taillardat, did not allow the Armenian volunteer units to pass from Sis to Hadjin. The 400 Armenian volunteers who came from Adana to Sis, with the final destination of Hadjin, were ordered by the French to wait in Sis and were later assigned to help with the evacuation of Sis and the transfer of the Armenian population from Sis to Adana.[76] At the beginning of March, after fully realising that no reinforcements or ammunition would be provided to the Armenian community in Hadjin, the Nationalist forces staged a dramatic attack on the neighbouring Armenian villages and captured Vahgan, a critical junction between Hadjin and Sis. This seizure effectively cut communication both into and out of Hadjin.[77] As the events unfolded, Mihran Damadyan sent an official letter to Colonel Edouard Bremond on 5 May 1920, stating that the French authorities, who had refused to send military assistance, bore total responsibility for the events.[78]

[72] Torosyan, Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians], 189.

[73] *Hay Tsayn*, Ուրիշ Հեռագիր Մը 'Պաշարուած ենք, հասէք' (Urish Herakir Mĕ 'Basharuats Enk Hasek') [Another Telegram: We Are under Siege, Please Help!], 16 March 1920, no. 208.

[74] Kütük, 'Kurtuluş Savaşı'nda Yukarı Çukurova' [Upper Çukurova during the War of Independence], 251.

[75] Yapujyan, Հայ Ժողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մեջ [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian People in Cilicia], 629.

[76] Torosyan, Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians], 193–9.

[77] Torosyan, Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians], 193.

[78] Ibid., 203.

On 30 April, *Giligia* claimed in an editorial that Ottoman Armenians had abandoned the local Armenian population of Hadjin by not sending assistance, leaving them to fend entirely for themselves.[79] According to Rupen Sahagyan, the Armenian community in Cilicia lost its faith in the possibility of Cilicia's independence – particularly after the Treaty of Sèvres, in which the Allied Powers agreed to return the occupied region to the Ottoman government – as well as its motivation to continue fighting.[80] Although prominent figures in the Armenian community made contact with French officials in an effort to urge them to help the Armenians in Hadjin, their efforts were fruitless. The French authorities, with the same pragmatic approach adopted from the beginning of their occupation campaign, saw no benefit in helping Hadjin, a distant town which held for them no strategic value. *Giligia* reported that the external world knew nothing of the true conditions inside Hadjin and vice versa.[81]

The Hadjin Armenians, realising that they were on their own, organised themselves and stocked food as well as ammunition and weapons for the defence of the town.[82] On 17 March, Kozanoğlu Doğan sent an offer to the Hadjin Armenians. After reminding them of the 'Turkish Armenian brotherhood throughout history', he requested their

[79] *Giligia*, Պարզ Խօսինք Այլեւս (Barz Khosink Aylevs) [From Now on, Let's Be Clear], 30 April 1920, no. 310.

[80] Kankruni, Կիլիկիոյ Հայութեան Վերջին Գաղթը [The Last Migration of Cilician Armenians], 146; Gasparyan, Հայկական Կոտորածները Կիլիկիայում [The Armenian Massacres in Cilicia], 187. The Treaty of Sèvres was signed on 10 August 1920 by the Allied Powers and the Ottoman Empire. According to the Treaty, the Trabzon, Erzurum, Van, and Bitlis regions were to be given to the Armenian state established in the Caucasus. However, the Cilicia region was designated as within the French zone of influence, and this decision affected the motivation of the Cilician Armenians in their quest to gain autonomy in the region. For more information on the Treaty of Sèvres, see A. L. Macfie, *The End of the Ottoman Empire, 1908–1923* (London: Longman, 1998), 319–22; Roderic H. Davison, *Essays in Ottoman and Turkish History, 1774–1923: The Impact of the West* (Austin: The University of Texas Press, 2011), 206–43; Simon Payaslian, 'United States Policy toward the Armenian Question and the Armenian Genocide' (PhD thesis, UCLA, 2003), 743–9.

[81] *Giligia*, Պարզ Խօսինք Այլեւս (Barz Khosink Aylevs) [From Now on, Let's Be Clear], 30 April 1920, no. 310.

[82] Vache, Ինչպէս Կորսնցուցինք Կիլիկիան: Հերոսամարտներ [How We Lost Cilicia: Heroic Battles], 31–2; H. B. Boghosyan, Հաճընի Ընդհանուր Պատմութիւնը Եւ Շրջակայ Գօզան-Տաղի Հայ Գիւղերը (Hajěni Ěnthanur Badmutyuně Ew Shrchagay Kozan-Daghi Hay Kiwgherě) [The General History of Hadjin and the Surrounding Villages of Kozandağ] (Los Angeles: Bozart Press, 1942), 650–2.

disarmament and surrender.[83] However, the fight continued, with Nationalist forces bearing down on the city. Still, the defence of Hadjin persisted, even though the number of Nationalist forces was far greater than that of Armenians. The Armenian volunteers on the front line and the women and orphans who had remained in the town worked collectively for their self-preservation. Armenian orphans, who were ten to twelve years old, 'did their part' by carrying guns and bullets from trench to trench and organising the ciphered communication between the units.[84] However, given the lack of food and ammunition, the population was unable to continue fighting after months of struggle. Until the end, after the combat moved underground to the tunnels of Hadjin, Armenians in the town fought to their deaths.[85]

On 2 December 1920, it was reported that out of the 10,000 Armenians who were in Hadjin, approximately 200 survived and managed to arrive in Adana.[86] Only Aram Çavuş and his unit, who were successful in breaking the siege and escaping under heavy gunfire to the surrounding hills, survived. After the Nationalist units had captured the town completely, their commanders ordered the soldiers to burn down the town, destroy every building, and set the tunnels on fire as punishment for the 'uprising of the Armenians'.[87] The indifference of the French authorities towards the cries for help from the Armenian population of Hadjin was a second blow to the French–Armenian relationship, causing deep and lasting disappointment and distrust within the local Armenian community.

[83] Ibid., 604–5; Kütük, 'Kurtuluş Savaşı'nda Yukarı Çukurova' [Upper Cilicia during the War of Independence], 239.

[84] Torosyan, Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians], 196.

[85] Boghosyan, Հաճընի Ընդհանուր Պատմութիւնը Եւ Շրջակայ Գօզան-Տաղի Հայ Գիւղերը [The General History of Hadjin and the Surrounding Villages of Kozandağ], 707–11.

[86] *Jagadamard,* Օգնութիւն Հաճընցին Oknutiwn Hajĕntsin [Help for Hadjin Armenians], 2 December 1920, no. 2442; Tachjian, 'The Cilician Armenians and French Policy', 551; Vache, Ինչպէս Կորսնցուցինք Կիլիկիան: Հերոսամարտներ [How We Lost Cilicia: Heroic Battles], 34.

[87] Çiçek, *Milli Mücadelede Adana ve Havalisi 1918–1922* [Adana and Its Vicinity during the National Struggle 1918–1922], 242; Zaven, Պատրիարքական Յուշերս Վաւերագիրներ Եվ Վկայութիւններ (Badriarkagan Hushers Vaverakirner Ev Vgayutiwnner) [My Patriarchal Memoirs] (Cairo: Nor Asdgh, 1947), 371.

Clashes in Antep (Aintab)

From January 1920, the situation for Armenians in Antep began to descend into chaos. Armenians were not able to open their shops or go to the market. A chain of events led to Armenians sheltering in their houses. On 29 February, for instance, an Armenian man disappeared.[88] Then on 1 March, an Armenian man and a woman were killed, while the next day several Islamised Armenians living with Muslims in the Muslim quarter were attacked by Muslims who accused them of being Armenian spies.[89] After that, on 6 March, an Armenian man who travelled to the Turkish quarter to buy flour was killed by Turkish bands.[90] A report published in *Hay Tsayn* summarised the state of fear in the Armenian community: 'From January 23 till this day, we have been living in the Armenian quarters with one family on top of another, one house on top of another. We cannot go out, interact with Turks and do some shopping . . . The self-defence activities of the Armenians are inadequate and insignificant. In a word, our situation is miserable.'[91]

The tension between Armenians and Ottoman Muslims in the city ran high.[92] The Armenian community had resolved that they would not accept the re-establishment of Ottoman Turkish power within the city and would defend themselves against any attack by Nationalist forces. An Armenian observer, K. Ankut, addressed the Turkish public in *Verchin Lur*:

> Be sure that no Armenian wants to live under Turkish rule, and if one day a limited Turkish authority is formed by a sling of a chance, Armenians would be the first to leave those places just to ensure the safety of their lives. We have perfectly analysed your psychology and we would not be fooled by your fake and deceitful flattery anymore. Current and future generations will always live far away from you for at least a century.[93]

The clashes in Antep began with an incident in the city's market.[94] When a French soldier, after being insulted by a group of Muslim

[88] *Hay Tsayn*, Կացութիւնը Այնթապի Մէջ (Gatsutiwnĕ Ayntabi Mech) [The Situation in Antep], 16 March 1920, no. 208.
[89] Ibid. [90] Ibid. [91] Ibid.
[92] Vache, Ինչպէս Կորսնցուցինք Կիլիկիան: Հերոսամարտներ [How We Lost Cilicia: Heroic Battles], 21–2.
[93] *Verchin Lur*, Կը Մերժենք (Gĕ Merzhenk) [We Refuse], 19 March 1920, no. 1829.
[94] Vache, Ինչպէս Կորսնցուցինք Կիլիկիան: Հերոսամարտներ [How We Lost Cilicia: Heroic Battles], 24.

youth, killed a young Muslim man, local Muslims started to attack Armenian shops. On the following day, Armenians began to move to the northern part of town to seek safety in the Armenian quarter. Turkish authorities made an announcement ensuring Armenians' safety and persuaded them to open their shops in the market. On 30 January, the Armenians started to reopen their shops. However, on the same day, a French soldier was killed in the market, and armed Turkish bands yet again attacked Armenian shops. Following these events, the remaining Armenian families moved to the northern part of the town, and all of the Muslim families who were living in the Armenian quarter departed for the southern part. With more than 5,000 Armenians gathered at the Surp Asdvadzadzin Armenian Cathedral, the French authorities suggested that they open their shops and return to normal life. Soon after, though, shots were heard from the market, whereupon the Armenians, who had returned to close their shops which had been hastily abandoned the previous day, were attacked by Turkish bands.[95]

On 1 April, a group of French soldiers left the city for Kilis, leaving only 800 troops remaining in the city. The Armenian women and children were then sheltered in the American hospital, believing that the American flag atop the building would protect them. Nonetheless, the bands targeted the hospital. Following the first clashes in the city and the events which transpired in Maraş, the Armenians of Antep established special military, police, and health bodies to organise the self-defence of the city's Armenian quarter.[96] An Armenian armed unit consisting of 800 Armenian volunteers was formed.[97] The Armenian craftsmen were soon producing bullets, bombs, and even cannons to build their arsenal. Armenian women, children, and elderly people worked to prepare the trenches.[98] Meanwhile, a population exchange took place at the junction of the Armenian quarter and the Muslim quarter, where the few Armenian families who remained in the Muslim

[95] Ibid.

[96] Torosyan, Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians], 220–1.

[97] *Giligia*, Դէպքերը Այնթապի Մէջ (Tebkerě Ayntabi Mech) [Events in Antep], 29 April 1920, no. 309.

[98] Ibid.; A. Gesar, Այնթապի Գոյամարտը (Ayntabi Koyamardě) [The Heroic Battle of Aintab] (Boston, MA: Amerigayi Ayntabtsineru Azkayin Miutyan, 1945), 55–68.

quarter passed to the Armenian side and the few Muslim families who remained in the Armenian quarter passed to the Muslim side.[99]

The commander of the French forces in the Middle East, Henri Gouraud, made a public announcement in May 1920 that a twenty-day ceasefire had been signed with the Nationalist authorities to discuss possible peace terms.[100] He underscored that France would continue to protect the Christian minorities in Cilicia. The Armenian public, not surprisingly, at this point viewed the ceasefire agreement between the French and the Nationalists with suspicion.[101] An editorial in *Hay Tsayn* claimed that, even though the agreement had been made, the Nationalist bands continued to conduct attacks on the surrounding villages of Adana and Ceyhan and attempted to cut the Adana–Mersin train line.[102] As part of the Franco-Turkish ceasefire agreement, the Armenian population in Antep was to lay down their arms and return to business by reopening their shops in the market. However, during the four months of warfare in the city, the Armenian community had depleted its coffers supporting the self-defence activities, resulting in a severe financial crisis. This was described in *Giligia* as a 'white massacre', as opposed to a 'red' one.[103] Thirty thousand Ottoman liras were collected as donations for the relief activities on behalf of Antep Armenians. American Armenians sent 30,000 dollars, while 2,000 Ottoman liras came from various Armenian organisations within the Ottoman state, with an additional 1,000 Ottoman liras coming from wealthy Antep Armenians and another 1,000 Ottoman liras from Istanbul Armenians.[104]

The Antep Armenians remained neutral when clashes between the French and Turkish forces commenced within the city after the ceasefire agreement expired. On 16 August 1920, the French commandership

[99] Ibid. [100] Moumdjian, 'Cilicia under French Administration', 481.

[101] *Hay Tsayn*, Զորավար Կուրոյի Յայտարարութեան Առթիւ (Zoravar Guroyi Haydararutyan Artiv) [Regarding the Statement of General Gouraud], 14 June 1920, no. 351; Salahi Ramadan Sonyel, *Turkish Diplomacy 1918–1923: Mustafa Kemal and the Turkish National Movement* (London: Sage, 1975), 76–7.

[102] *Hay Tsayn*, Թրքական Դաշնագրի Ստորագրումին Նշանակութիւնը (Trkagan Tashnakri Sdorakrumin Nshanagutiwnĕ) [The Meaning of the Signing of the Turkish Pact], 7 September 1920, no. 427.

[103] *Giligia*, Կեանքը Այնթապի Մէջ (Gyankĕ Ayntabi Mech) [Life in Antep], 4 September 1920, no. 418.

[104] *Giligia*, Կեանքը Այնթապի Մէջ (Gyankĕ Ayntabi Mech) [Life in Antep], 5 September 1920, no. 419.

called upon Armenians to join the battle on the French side. When the ANU in Antep[105] (which consisted of twenty-eight members from all political factions of Armenian society, as well as the business and intellectual classes) refused, French artillery 'erroneously' fired into the Armenian quarter and French forces began to take control of the Armenian trenches.[106] Following the provocations by the French forces, the Armenian community relented and agreed to ally with them against the Nationalists, reasoning that it was better to fight one enemy rather than two.

The clashes between Armenians and Ottoman Muslims in Antep would continue for more than ten months. The Armenian quarter was defended by Armenian volunteers until an agreement was reached between the French and Ankara governments and signed on 20 October 1921.[107] As part of the agreement, the French agreed to withdraw from Cilicia and in return the Ankara government guaranteed the rights of the Christian minorities and granted permission to the French to operate the railway line. The French administration agreed to evacuate the entire region of Cilicia, including Adana, Mersin, and Tarsus, by January 1922.[108] Two hundred and forty-five soldiers died on the French side, only fifty-four of whom were of French origin, the rest being Algerians, Tunisians, and Senegalese.[109]

Fearing disaster and violence, Antep's Armenians were eager to leave the city but were not allowed to do so.[110] The French authorities authorised only around 5,000 to 8,000 Armenians in total to depart. During the clashes, the Armenian community had spent four million

[105] Vache, Ինչպէս Կորսնցուցինք Կիլիկիան: Հերոսամարտներ [How We Lost Cilicia: Heroic Battles], 24.

[106] Torosyan, Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians], 223; Gesar, Այնթապի Գոյամարտը [The Heroic Battle of Aintab], 158–9.

[107] *Arevelyan Mamul*, Ֆրանքօ-Քէմալական Համաձայնութիւնը (Franko-Kemalagan Hamatsaynutiwně) [The French-Nationalist Agreement], 9 November 1921, no. 2701.

[108] Kankruni, Կիլիկիոյ Հայութեան Վերջին Գաղթը [The Last Migration of Cilician Armenians], 127.

[109] Yapujyan, Հայ Ժողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մէջ [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian People in Cilicia], 742–3.

[110] Ümit Kurt, 'Introduction', in *The Heroic Battle of Aintab*, by Kevork Baboian, Kevork A. Sarafian, eds., Ümit Kurt, trans. (London: Gomidas Institute, 2018), 20–1.

francs, emptying the pockets of its members.[111] The ceasefire agreement was accepted by the Ottoman Turkish press as a victory for the Ankara government. According to *Vakit*, with this agreement, the Ankara government proved that it was possible for them to negotiate a fair deal with Western powers. The paper claimed that Ankara's policy was not completely dependent on the Bolsheviks, and the Ankara government was ready to provide minority rights to Christians, both in Cilicia and in the Izmir region.[112]

Asking for the Moon: The Declaration of Independence in Cilicia

The relationship between the French authorities and the Armenian community in the Cilicia region may be characterised as flawed and unequal. The Armenian community's leadership often received orders from the French commanders to organise Armenian volunteers to aid in the operations of the French occupying forces. It was challenging to mobilise the public, as these requests were unrelated to the self-defence of Armenian towns; in response, the French authorities demanded that Armenian volunteers leave their homes to serve where the French authorities deemed them necessary.[113] Consequently, Armenians began to view their independence – or at least autonomy – as vital. They thought that only by breaking free of their dependence on France would the Armenians be allowed to dedicate the entirety of their armed forces to the defence of the Armenian quarters in Cilician cities. The editors of *Hay Tsayn* were particularly outspoken against the unjust demands of the French:

> A nation that already devoted its limited trained forces to ongoing clashes, a nation whose young generation is deprived of weapons and military training, and a nation which is now allowed to mobilise its youth by its own will; how can it prepare more than a thousand men in a couple of days, who are supposed to be able to collaborate with the trained, well-managed, well-armed and equipped French soldiers?[114]

[111] Yapujyan, Հայ Ժողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մեջ [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian People in Cilicia], 742–3.
[112] *Vakit*, 'İlk İtilaf' [The First Alliance], 24 October 1921, no. 1391.
[113] *Hay Tsayn*, Ֆրանսական Իշխանութեանց Վերաբերումը Հայոց Հանդէպ (Fransagan Ishanutyants Veraperumĕ Hayots Hanteb) [The French Attitude Towards the Armenians], 10 September 1920, no. 430.
[114] Ibid.

The Armenian Supreme National Council, which was established in Adana at the end of May 1920, discussed the economic and political ramifications of declaring independence. After seven months of struggle, the Armenian community believed that an autonomous Armenian administration needed to be established in Cilicia.[115] The Armenian political parties agreed to act in co-operation and put aside their ideological differences.[116] On 31 July 1920, the Supreme National Council moved to declare independence. The members agreed to make the official announcement on 4 August.[117]

Even though the political parties agreed on the act of declaring independence, chasms of disagreement existed with regard to the implementation of this plan. For example, on 2 August 1920, Minas Veradzin, a central committee member of the ARF, declared the autonomy of the 'Rupinyan Republic', a territory controlled by the French mandate which sat between the Seyhan and Ceyhan rivers.[118] When Mihran Damadyan received the news of Minas Veradzin's declaration, he registered his protest with the ARF. In response, ARF headquarters made clear that Minas Veradzin's announcement was not the party's official decision.[119] In fact, this initiative was backed by no political parties or political figures in Adana, nor did it attract support from the Armenian community. Instead, it was greeted with suspicion by the French and embarrassment by the Ottoman authorities.

Instead, two days later on 4 August 1920, at the invitation of the ANU in Adana, representatives of the Romioi, Assyrian, Syrian, and Chaldean communities – together with representatives of the Armenian

[115] *Giligia*, Կյանքը Այնթապի Մէջ (Gyankĕ Ayntabi Mech) [Life in Antep], 7 September 1920, no. 420; Moumdjian, 'Cilicia under French Administration', 482.

[116] Torosyan, Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians], 240.

[117] Yapujyan, Հայ Ժողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մէջ [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian People in Cilicia], 836–7; Moumdjian, 'Cilicia under French Administration', 482; V. Vroyr, 'Պատմական Ակնարկ Մը Կիլիկեան Վերջին Անցքերու Շուրջ' (Badmagan Agnarg Mĕ Giligyan Verchin Antskeru Shurch) [A Historical Overview of the Latest Events in Cilicia] in Կիլիկեան Տարեցոյց *1922* (Giligyan Daretsuyts 1922) [Cilician Almanac 1922] (Istanbul: G. Keshishyan Orti, 1922), 171.

[118] Gasparyan, Հայկական Կոտորածները Կիլիկիայում [The Armenian Massacres in Cilicia], 160–1; Moumdjian, 'Cilicia under French Administration', 483.

[119] Yapujyan, Հայ Ժողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մէջ [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian People in Cilicia], 839.

Catholic, Protestant, and Apostolic churches – and the Supreme National Council gathered and established the Inter-Christian Council of Cilicia, which later made the decision to declare the independence of Cilicia and asked to become a mandate under French protection.[120]

In their declaration of independence, the Christian communities underscored that, even though the Armistice had been signed between the Entente and the Ottoman government, a state of fear continued in the Cilicia region and warfare persisted via armed bands and the newly emerged National movement. They argued that 275,000 Christians in the Cilicia region could no longer live under Ottoman administration, given the massacres of their people not only during the war but also during the Armistice period.[121] The declaration was signed by prominent figures of the Christian communities in the Cilicia region, including Mihran Damadyan, representative of the Delegation of United Armenia; Kevork Aslanyan, Armenian bishop of the Diocese of Apostolic Armenians in Adana; Artin Kekligyan, Armenian Catholic bishop of Adana; Dr Mnatsaganyan, president of the ANU; Vahan Zhamgochyan, secretary of the ANU; Aristides Simeonoglu, a notable businessman; Barbur Bey, a notable member of the Arab Orthodox community; Joseph Tüfenkci, vicar general of the Chaldeans for Cilicia; Philippos, patriarchal vicar of the Assyrian Catholic Community of Adana; and representatives of the Romioi community.[122] The declaration ended: 'Long live independent Cilicia, long live protector France!'[123]

[120] Ibid., 245; Gasparyan, Հայկական Կոտորածները Կիլիկիայում [The Armenian Massacres in Cilicia], 160–1; Aram Asbed and Nuart Asbed, Կիլիկիան Տարեցոյց *1922* (Giligian Daretsuyts 1922) [The Cilician Almanac 1922] (Istanbul: Keshishyan Orti, 1922), 171; *Hay Tsayn*, 11 September 1920, no. 431; Pattie, *The Armenian Legionnaires*, 235–7; Zaven, Պատրիարքական Յուշերս Վաւերագիրներ Եվ Վկայութիւններ [My Patriarchal Memoirs], 372–3.

[121] Torosyan, Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians], 246–7.

[122] Yapujyan, Հայ Ժողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մեջ [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian People in Cilicia], 846–7; Boyadjian, *Haygakan Lekeone* [The Armenian Legion], 346–50.

[123] Torosyan, Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians], 249; Kankruni, Կիլիկիոյ Հայութեան Վերջին Գաղթը [The Last Migration of Cilician Armenians], 118–19; Moumdjian, 'Cilicia under French Administration', 484; Boyadjian, *Haygakan Lekeone* [The Armenian Legion], 346–50. The president of the newly

On 5 August, representatives of the newly established government occupied the administrative building and deposed the Ottoman Turkish governor from his post. The French authorities responded by ordering the Armenian staff members to vacate the premises, with Bremond sending a number of officers to ensure compliance. Mihran Damadyan resisted the officers, arguing that the members of the government were elected by the inter-Christian committee and represented the will of more than 275,000 Christian people. Mihran Damadyan, Dr Mnatsaganyan, and Vahan Zhamgochyan stood fast until the last moment.[124] However, Bremond dispatched armed officers to the building and removed the self-declared government members by force.[125] Following this incident, the French administration ceased all communication with ANU representatives. When High Commissioner Henri Gouraud arrived in Adana in September, he ordered the disbanding of Armenian militias, deported a group of prominent Armenian individuals (including Archbishop Mushegh Seropyan, who was sentenced to ten years of forced labour by French court martial), disarmed the volunteers who were prepared to leave for Hadjin, and closed some of the Armenian newspapers.[126] While French interests were not obviously or outwardly anti-Armenian, it became evident that the protection of French investment and capital within the country was a matter of higher priority than the Armenian community's political

established government was Mihran Damadyan. Dr Mnatsaganyan, of the Tashnag Party, was elected as the foreign minister; Dr Bezirjiyan, of the Ramgavar Party, as the minister of internal affairs; Vahan Zhamgochyan, of the Hnchag Party, as the minister of war; Antranik Genjyan, of the Hnchag Party, as the minister of finance; Garabed Nalbandyan, of the Hnchag Party, as the minister of development and agriculture; Assyrian notable Jan as the minister of education; and Nikolaki, a prominent Romioi, as the minister of justice. The communication and construction ministers were appointed from the Turkish and Arab communities.

124 Yapujyan, Հայ Ժողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մեջ [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian People in Cilicia], 850–1; Tachjian, *La France en Cilicie et en Haute-Mezopotamie*, 154.

125 Torosyan, Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians], 251; Kankruni, Կիլիկիոյ Հայութեան Վերջին Գաղթը (Giligioy Hayutyan Verchin Kaghtě) [The Last Migration of Cilician Armenians], 118–19.

126 Yapujyan, Հայ Ժողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մեջ [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian People in Cilicia], 853; Kankruni, Կիլիկիոյ Հայութեան Վերջին Գաղթը [The Last Migration of Cilician Armenians], 119; Gasparyan, Հայկական Կոտորածները Կիլիկիայում [The Armenian Massacres in Cilicia], 163.

interests.[127] Ultimately, the actions of the French authorities – reneging on their assurances of assistance and denying the pleas from Armenians – were so harsh that the French commander Julien Dufieux labelled the Armenian representatives 'bad shepherds' for leading their people 'astray with the promises' of the independence movement.[128]

In his memoirs, Mihran Damadyan claimed that they could have rallied 5,000 Armenian volunteers to occupy the administrative building by force but chose not to only to avoid further harming French–Armenian relations.[129] According to Damadyan, there were two alternative paths for the Armenian community in Cilicia. The first was to emigrate to Syria, which would mean the destruction of the Armenian economic and social life resulting from the abandonment of Armenian shops, investments, and property. Damadyan called this possible emigration another 'white massacre'. The second alternative for the Armenian community was to remain in their native lands and to continue to struggle against the Nationalists, a will which was demonstrated by the decision to stay in Cilicia and declare independence.[130] However, the lack of commitment from all the strata of the community – from the political sphere to the organisation of armed units and the political intrigues of the Nationalist authorities, which were effective in deterring the French – resulted in a futile attempt which lasted only a few days.

Final Stage of the French Occupation: The Clashes in Adana

With clashes and violent incidents in Cilicia's cities, including Maraş, Hadjin, Antep, and Sis, tensions between the Muslim and Armenian communities in Adana were escalating. While the Nationalist units' attacks on the surrounding villages of Adana were devastating, the

[127] *Hay Tsayn*, Ֆրանսական Իշխանութեանց Վերաբերումը Հայոց Հանդէպ (Fransagan Ishkanutyants Veraperumĕ Hayots Hanteb) [The French Attitude Towards the Armenians], 13 September 1920, no. 432.

[128] *Hay Tsayn*, Ֆրանսական Իշխանութեանց Վերաբերումը Հայոց Հանդէպ (Fransagan Ishkanutyants Veraperumĕ Hayots Hanteb) [The French Attitude Towards the Armenians], 14 September 1920, no. 433.

[129] Yapujyan, Հայ Ժողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մէջ [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian People in Cilicia], 867; Moumdjian, 'Cilicia under French Administration', 485.

[130] Torosyan, Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians], 237.

city's control remained in the hands of the French military, together with the Armenian volunteer units. After the Nationalists realised that guerrilla warfare alone would not succeed in breaking the resistance of French and Armenian units, talk of launching artillery strikes against the city increased. When rumours of Nationalist shelling spread – combined with the declaration by Nationalists that those Turkish families who remained in Adana would be considered the French's allies and, thus, enemies of the Turkish nation – in a state of fear, Turkish families began vacating their properties within the city and moving to the surrounding Turkish villages. This flight of 40,000 Muslims from Adana became known as the '*Kaç-Kaç* (Run-Run) incident'. In addition to the above reasons, Turkish civilians feared potential attacks organised by Armenian volunteer units. With many of the city's properties now abandoned, Armenian refugees who had not found shelter (a significant number, as there were more than 100,000 in Adana) were settled in the vacated properties.[131]

While the Turkish population was leaving the city, Nationalist agents began to incite *Fellah*s[132] against Armenians to foment more unrest within the city; additionally, the Nationalists hoped to show that Armenians created conflicts not only with the Turks but also with other ethnic and religious communities, further dampening French–Armenian relations. The strategy bore fruit after Fellahs began to kidnap Armenian merchants who were travelling in the city's remote parts.[133] On 10 July, when an Armenian merchant was kidnapped by Fellahs in the market, Armenians in turn arbitrarily arrested a few Fellahs to trade for the return of the abducted merchant.[134]

The French authorities interpreted the city's evacuation by Turkish families as a result of the antagonism and violence of the Armenian volunteer units. Colonel Edouard Bremond, in turn, demanded the

[131] Yapujyan, Հայ Ժողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մեջ [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian People in Cilicia], 792.; Bremon, Կիլիկիա *1919–1920*'ին [Cilicia in 1919–1920], 112–13; Tachjian, *La France en Cilicie et en Haute-Mezopotamie*, 151; Bağcı, 'An Analysis of Inter-Communal Conflicts', 114–15.

[132] Arabs in the Adana and Mersin area were called *Fellah*s (derived from '*fellahin*', meaning 'farmer') by the Ottoman Turkish community.

[133] *Hay Tsayn*, Ֆրանսական Իշխանութեանց Վերաբերումը Հայոց Հանդէպ (Fransagan Ishkanutyants Veraperumĕ Hayots Hanteb) [The French Attitude Towards the Armenians], 4 September 1920, no. 425.

[134] Ibid.

disarmament of Armenian volunteers.[135] After most of the Turkish population left Adana, Nationalist forces embarked upon an offensive in the second half of July.[136] The clashes continued until an agreement was reached between the French and the Nationalists in October 1921.

A Harsh Truth for the Ottoman Armenians in Cilicia

When the French intentions and interests were clearly understood by the Armenian community following the clashes between the French forces and the Nationalists, Armenian intellectuals attempted to persuade the Armenian population not to leave their lands, whatever the result might be in the political arena. An editorial in *Hay Tsayn* urged prominent Armenian figures and wealthy businessmen not to emigrate abroad from Cilicia but to lead their communities by example, remaining in their native lands and protecting the 'Armenianness' of the region. According to the paper, those Armenians who left would never return 'to see Cilicia as part of the Armenian nation' and the only means of keeping this hope alive was 'to stay in the region and continue struggling against the Turks'.[137] On 28 August 1920, the paper ran Melkon Asadur's article, entitled 'I Am Here, I Will Stay Here', as its editorial. In this article, Melkon Asadur highlighted the will of the Cilician Armenians to hold fast in their native land, regardless of the agreement the French authorities had reached with the Nationalists. Asadur concluded, 'I am now in my ancestors' land. From now on, no power can expel me. It is my home, my nest'.[138]

Indeed, ten months after the publication of articles intended to influence Armenian intellectuals and the Armenian public not to leave Cilicia, the signing of an agreement between the French and the Nationalists influenced Armenians' viewpoint with regard to emigration. On 20 October 1921, negotiations between the Nationalist authorities and Henry Franklin-Bouillon, the representative of the French government, came to an end, arousing anxiety among Cilicia's

[135] Torosyan, Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians], 230.

[136] Yapujyan, Հայ Ժողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մեջ [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian People in Cilicia], 807–8.

[137] *Hay Tsayn*, Արտագաղթի Շարժումին Առթիւ (Ardakaghti Sharzhumin Artiv) [Regarding the Emigration Movement], 16 June 1920, no. 353.

[138] *Hay Tsayn*, Ես Հոս Եմ Եւ Հոս Կը Մնամ (Es Hos Em Ew Hos Gĕ Mnam) [I Am Here and I Will Stay Here], 28 August 1920, no. 418.

non-Muslims.[139] Armenians viewed the agreement between the French and the Nationalists as a betrayal by French politicians, who had announced previously that they would pursue the establishment of an independent Armenian state in the Cilicia region, free from the Ottoman Empire. Even though French authorities had provided assurances that specific articles in the agreement, as accepted by the Nationalists, enshrined the rights of non-Muslim groups, Armenians nonetheless feared future atrocities and oppression of non-Muslim communities following the departure of French forces.[140] According to *Arevelyan Mamul* (Oriental Press), against the will of 200,000 Cilician Armenians, the French authorities bequeathed the region to the Nationalists two months later in December 1921, abandoning Armenians to a state of uncertainty and insecurity.[141]

Henry Franklin-Bouillon informed the local Armenian authorities that the French administration would cede the region's control to the Nationalists on 21 November and would leave the region by 4 January 1922. While he reiterated that there was no need for the Armenian community to emigrate to another country, as the Nationalists had guaranteed that their rights would be protected, he also noted that the display of the Armenian flags was prohibited in the region, so as to not provoke the Nationalist authorities.[142] Vahrich Geokjyan, an Armenian author and the editor of the Antep-published *Sharzhoum* (Action) journal, wrote the following in response to the statements of Franklin-Bouillon regarding the Armenians' emigration: 'Who does not have reasons to be afraid if he is an Armenian, a non-Kemalist who fought side by side with the French against Kemalists?'[143]

Vahrich Geokjyan argued that the French encouraged the Turkish population's return to the Adana region and forcibly displaced the

[139] Bağcı, 'An Analysis of Inter-Communal Conflicts', 110.

[140] *Arevelyan Mamul*, Ֆրանքօ-Քէմալական Համաձայնութիւնն Ու Կիլիկեցիք (Franko-Kemalagan Hamatsaynutiwnn U Giligetsik) [Franco-Nationalist Agreement and the Cilicians], 11 December 1921, no. 2729.

[141] *Arevelyan Mamul*, Ֆրանքօ-Քէմալական Համաձայնութիւնն Ու Կիլիկեցիք (Franko-Kemalagan Hamatsaynutiwnn U Giligetsik) [Franco-Nationalist Agreement and the Cilicians], 22 December 1921, no. 2738.

[142] *Arevelyan Mamul*, Ֆրանքօ-Քէմալական Համաձայնութիւնն Ու Կիլիկեցիք (Franko-Kemalagan Hamatsaynutiwnn U Giligetsik) [Franco-Nationalist Agreement and the Cilicians], 14 December 1921, no. 2731.

[143] *Arevelyan Mamul*, Ֆրանքօ-Քէմալական Համաձայնութիւնն Ու Կիլիկեցիք (Franko-Kemalagan Hamatsaynutiwnn U Giligetsik) [Franco-Nationalist Agreement and the Cilicians], 17 December 1921, no. 2734.

Armenian refugees who were sheltered in the camps at a time when there was a housing crisis in Cilician cities. According to Geokjyan, homeless Armenian refugees who were forced to leave the camps were left with no option but to live on the streets. He claimed that Armenian businessmen, who were under strict boycotts from Turkish customers, were unable to sustain themselves, and those Armenians who wanted to sell their properties could not find buyers. Propaganda abounded which proclaimed that Muslims who wanted to buy the Armenians' properties need only exercise patience, as 'they would have those properties free of charge soon'.[144]

The Ankara government had previously assured that they would give concessions and rights to the non-Muslim population.[145] Ottoman Turkish papers circulated that, as a result of Ankara's promises of safety and security, Armenians would decide not to emigrate to Aleppo or other Syrian cities; however, according to the Armenian press, these reports did not reflect the truth.[146] The editor of *Vakit* noted that these rights that were assured by the Ankara government to the Christian populations were included in the Ottoman government's constitution; thus, the issue at hand was not one of writing new laws but of enforcing those that already existed. The paper wrote that if a non-Muslim 'obeys the law and has the will of living with Turks in prosperity', then there was 'a place for him'.[147]

Commander Muhittin Paşa entered Adana and was welcomed by the prominent Ottoman Muslim members of the community on 24 November 1921. More than 60,000 Armenians rushed to the port of Mersin, waiting to be transported by ships to Cyprus, Izmir, or Istanbul.[148] Reports from Larnaka noted that 9,000 Armenians had arrived there and 2,000 more were on their way. The Catholicos of Cilicia, Sahag Khabayan,

[144] *Arevelyan Mamul*, Ֆրանքօ-Քէմալական Համաձայնութիւնն Ու Կիլիկեցիք (Franko-Kemalagan Hamatsaynutiwnn U Giligetsik) [Franco-Nationalist Agreement and the Cilicians], 15 December 1921, no. 2732.

[145] *İleri*, 'Ankara'nın Adana Hristiyanlarına Verdiği İmtiyazlar' [Rights Given by Ankara to Adana Christians], 1 December 1921, no. 1279.

[146] *Vakit*, 'Kilikya Hristiyanları Hicret Etmiyor?' [Are Cilicia Christians Not Emigrating?], 21 December 1921, no. 1448; *Vakit*, 'Kilikya'dan Ermeni Muhacereti Tevakkuf Etti' [The Emigration of Armenians from Cilicia Has Paused], 9 December 1921, no. 1436; *Vakit*, 'Adana Ermenileri Hicretten Vazgeçtiler' [Adana Armenians Have Decided Not to Emigrate], 6 December 1921, no. 1433.

[147] *Vakit*, Kilikya'da Ekaliyetler [Minorities in Cilicia], 3 November 1921, no. 1401.

[148] Moumdjian, 'Cilicia under French Administration', 486.

sent a telegram to Istanbul on 27 November, giving notice that he would be leaving Adana and moving to Aleppo.[149] Non-native Cilician Armenians who had settled in the region during the French occupation feared that the Turkish owners of their properties would return to Cilicia and reclaim them. Alarmed, thousands of Armenians left their properties and departed for the port of Mersin.[150] Even though the Nationalist authorities had announced that the non-Muslim population's rights would be strictly protected under the Nationalist administration and the Armenians who arrived in Adana from interior parts of Anatolia would be returned to their native cities such as Sivas, Kayseri, and Harput, there was panic among the Cilician Armenians because no promises had been made to those who chose to remain.[151] While some groups of wealthy Armenians left their properties and fled from Adana to Izmir, the poor had not the means to desert their houses.[152] Yet, as far as Armenian public opinion was concerned, there was only one option for the Armenian community: to leave the region before the Nationalists' arrival.[153] An individual who sent an article to the paper under the pseudonym *Pro-French* asked the French authorities, 'If you were going to leave us, why did you bring us here? We will not forget that our holy cemeteries were trampled on by Mustafa Kemal after your departure'.[154] An editorial in *Arevelyan Mamul* entitled 'France is Selling the Cilician Armenians to Mustafa Kemal' conveyed the anger of the Armenian community towards the French authorities in the strongest of terms:

Long live France! Long live France, who played a flawless Judas role for the Cilician Armenians. The names of [Aristide] Briand, lightheaded Franklin-Bouillon and their friends shall be written in the history with red ink as the executioners of Armenians. Perhaps they agree with the policy of Talat,

[149] *Vercin Lur*, Ատանան Թուրքերուն Ձեռք (Adanan Turkerun Tserk) [Adana in the Hands of Turks], 28 November 1921, no. 2346.

[150] *Verchin Lur*, Կիլիկիայէն Հայոց Փախուստը (Giligiayen Hayots Pakhusdĕ) [The Flight of Armenians from Cilicia], 9 December 1921, no. 1882.

[151] Zeidner, *The Tricolor over the Taurus*, 291.

[152] *Arevelyan Mamul*, Ֆրանսա Կը Ծախէ Կիլիկիոյ Հայութիւնը Մուսթաֆա Քէմալի (Fransa Gĕ Dzakhe Giligioy Hayutyiwnĕ) [France Sells the Armenians of Cilicia to Mustafa Kemal], 11 November 1921, no. 2703.

[153] *Arevelyan Mamul*, Ֆրանքօ-Քէմալական Համաձայնութիւնն Ու Կիլիկեցիք (Franko-Kemalagan Hamatsaynutiwnn U Giligetsik) [Franco-Nationalist Agreement and the Cilicians], 18 December 1921, no. 2735.

[154] *Arevelyan Mamul*, Ֆրանքօ-Քէմալական Հռչակաւոր Համաձայնութիւնը (Franko-Kemalagan Hrchagavor Hamatsaynutiwnĕ) [The Renowned Franco-Nationalist Agreement], 30 December 1921, no. 2746.

Enver and Nazım and will have the Cilician Armenians massacred as well, so that the Armenian question becomes clearer and buried for good.[155]

At the end of November 1921, more than 50,000 Armenians waited in Mersin to board ships bound for 'unknown destinations'.[156] Thousands of Armenians who applied for travel documents to emigrate were told they would have to wait at least ten days to receive their documents, a stalling tactic to dissuade them from departing. The French authorities were reluctant to accelerate the process and continued to encourage the Armenians to stay in their lands and not leave.[157] It was nearly impossible to obtain a passport without bribing officials in Adana, so those Armenians who could not afford to do so largely had their applications denied.[158] By 16 January 1922, the French ships transported the last Armenian group, consisting of 15,800 people, to Beirut; for this trip, the passengers were forced to pay 8.5 Ottoman liras per person, which was nearly double the normal cost.[159] Despite the fact that Damascus was the most sought-after destination, French officials would not organise transportation there.[160] Reportedly, the Arabic press in Beirut published articles criticising the Armenians' arrival in Beirut and expressing the Arabic community's unease. The Armenians in Kilis and Antep were allowed to migrate to Aleppo.[161] During the evacuation of Cilicia, more than 15,000 Armenians from Amanus, Ceyhan, Cebel-i Bereket, and Dörtyol took shelter in the Iskenderun region, without access to food or proper accommodation, forced to sleep on the streets.[162] The Kaghtaganats Arakman

155 *Arevelyan Mamul*, Ֆրանսա Կը Ծախէ Կիլիկիոյ Հայութիւնը Մուսթաֆա Քէմալի (Fransa Gĕ Dzakhe Giligioy Hayutiwnĕ) [France Sells the Armenians of Cilicia to Mustafa Kemal], 11 November 1921, no. 2703.

156 Kankruni, Կիլիկիոյ Հայութեան Վերջին Գաղթը (Giligioy Hayutyan Verchin Kaghtĕ) [The Last Migration of Cilician Armenians], 128.

157 *Arevelyan Mamul*, Ֆրանքօ-Քէմալական Համաձայնութիւնն Ու Կիլիկեցիք (Franko-Kemalagan Hamatsaynutiwnĕ U Giligetsik) [Franco-Nationalist Agreement and the Cilicians], 21 December 1921, no. 2737; *Arevelyan Mamul*, Ֆրանքօ-Քէմալական Համաձայնութիւնն Ու Կիլիկեցիք (Franko-Kemalagan Hamatsaynutiwnĕ U Giligetsik) [Franco-Nationalist Agreement and the Cilicians], 30 December 1921, No. 2746; Tachjian, 'The Cilician Armenians and French Policy', 552–3.

158 Yapujyan, Հայ Ժողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մէջ [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian People in Cilicia], 398.

159 *Arevelyan Mamul*, Կիլիկեան Եղեռնը (Giligyan Eghernĕ) [Cilician Calamity], 25 January 1922, no. 2765.

160 Ibid. 161 Ibid.

162 *Jagadamard*, Կիլիկեցի Գաղթականներու Վիճակը (Giligetsi Kaghtaganneru Vijagĕ) [The Condition of Cilician Refugees], 15 February 1922, no. 990.

Hantsnakhoump (Refugee Transportation Committee) was organised by the Armenian leadership not only to assist with the transportation of the Armenian refugees but also to find jobs for them in the new lands to ensure their self-sustainability.[163]

Dikran Kupelyan, an Armenian lawyer, highlighted the reasons why Armenians chose to leave Cilicia:

> Had it not been for the so-called defender France's ban, the Christian population of Cilicia would have already won their case . . . Yes, remaining [in Cilicia] was evil, but leaving it was the lesser evil. If we had stayed there, no matter what, our safety would be temporary and most probably we would all have lost our lives. But by leaving we stay alive. Even though poor and miserable, we are still full of hope that one day we will return to our lands.[164]

Those Ottoman Armenians who returned to their native towns and villages in Cilicia under the promise of safety and security from the occupying French authorities had high hopes for the establishment of a free state under French protection. Yet geopolitical developments led the French authorities to establish relations with the emerging Turkish National Movement. While the Armenians protested France's 'betrayal', during the subsequent decades, Armenians maintained close relations with the French and played an important role in Syria and Lebanon.[165]

The Turkish–Armenian War in the Caucasus and the Ottoman Armenians[166]

During World War I, the Russian Empire occupied the Ottoman Empire's eastern provinces, including Erzurum, Van, Bitlis, Trabzon, and Muş. Some Russian Armenians volunteered to join the Russian

[163] *Arevelyan Mamul*, Փրկենք Կիլիկիոյ Բեկորները (Prgenk Giligioy Pegornerě) [Let's Save the Remnants of Cilicia], 9 February 1922, no. 2778.

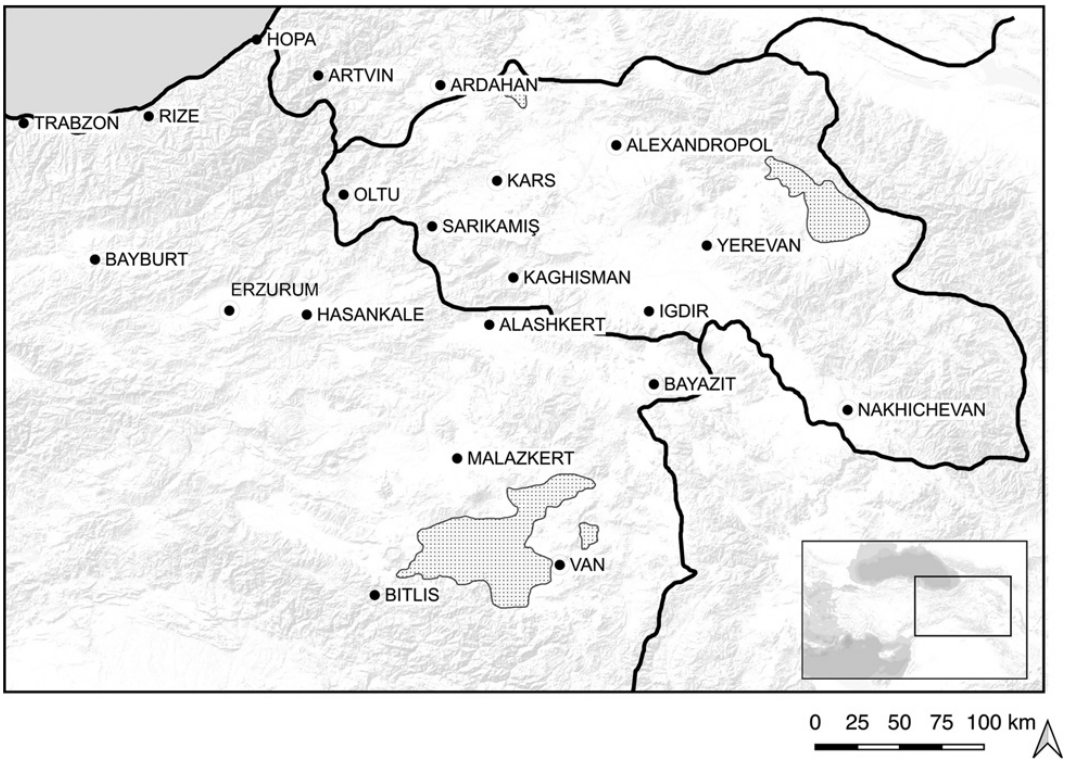
[164] *Arevelyan Mamul*, Ի՞նչու Կիլիկեցիք Գաղթեցին (Inchu Giligetsik Kaghtetsin) [Why Did the Cilician Armenians Migrate?], 20 December 1921, no. 2736.

[165] For Armenian–French relations in Syria, see Laura Robson, *States of Separation: Transfer, Partition and the Making of the Modern Middle East* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2017), 58–63.

[166] An extended version of this section has been published as Ari Şekeryan, 'Rethinking the Turkish-Armenian War in the Caucasus: The Position of Ottoman Armenians', *War in History* 27(1) (2020), https://doi.org/10.1177/0968344517747140.

offensive, in the hope that the Russians might leave the six provinces, which they hoped would soon be established as 'United Armenia' as promised by the Allied Powers. Following the Russian Empire's collapse and the beginning of the civil war in Russia, Russian forces retreated from eastern Anatolia in 1918, leaving the disorganised Armenians vulnerable to Ottoman forces. In the aftermath, Armenian political parties assembled a congress in Tiflis with 200 delegates and formed the Armenian National Council, consisting of fifteen members. To fill the power vacuum in the region, Georgians, Armenians, and Azerbaijanis formed the Transcaucasian Commissariat, though they would each soon pursue their own independence. In 1918, during the last months of World War I, the Ottoman army launched a campaign to retake the provinces which had been abandoned by the retreating Russian forces. To put down the Ottoman offensive against the Armenian nucleus of Yerevan and the holy city of Echmiadzin, the Armenian National Council declared on 30 May 1918 that it would enshrine the rights of the Armenian people, thus effectively declaring Armenian independence.[167] Soon after the signing of the Armistice of

[167] Richard Hovannisian, 'Genocide and Independence 1914–1921', in *The Armenians: Past and Present in the Making of National Identity*, Edmund Herzig and Marina Kurkchiyan, eds. (Abingdon: Routledge Curzon, 2005), 97–104; Razmik Panossian, *The Armenians from Kings and Priests to Merchants and Commissars* (London: Hurst & Co., 2006), 243–5; Jeremy Smith, 'Non-Russians in the Soviet Union and After', in *The Cambridge History of Russia, Volume 3: The Twentieth Century*, Ronald Grigor Suny, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 496; Bülent Gökay, 'Turkish Settlement and the Caucasus, 1918–20', *Middle Eastern Studies* 32 (1996), 54; Firuz Kazemzadeh, *The Struggle for Transcaucasia, 1917–1921* (New York: Templar Press, 1951), 211–21; Michael A. Reynolds, 'Buffers, Not Brethren: Young Turk Military Policy in World War I and the Myth of Panturanism', *Past & Present* 203 (2009), 166–7; Artin H. Arslanian and Robert L. Nichols, 'Nationalism and the Russian Civil War: The Case of Volunteer Army-Armenian Relations, 1918–20', *Soviet Studies* (31)4 (1979), 564. For a detailed survey of the road to the independence struggle of the Armenians, see Tsatur Baveli Aghayan, Հոկտեմբերը Եվ Հայ Ժողովրդի Ազատագրական Պայքարը (Hokdemperě Ew Hay Zhoghovurti Azatagrakan Baykarě) [October and the Liberation Struggle of the Armenian Nation] (Yerevan: Yerevani Petakan Hamalsaran, 1982); Ashot Hovsepi Harutyunyan, Թուրքական Ինտերվենցիան Անդրկովկաս *1918* Թ. և Ինքնապաշտպանական Կռիվները (Turkakan Interventsian Antrgovgas 1918 T. Ew Inknabashdbanagan Grivnerě) [The Turkish Intervention in the Transcaucasus and Self-Defence Fighting] (Yerevan: GA hrat., 1984).



Map 3.2 The border zone between the Ottoman Empire and the Republic of Armenia (1918)

Mudros on 30 October 1918, the Ottoman military was to cease its activities on the eastern border.[168] With the aid of British authorities, Armenians were able to take back lands including Kars, Ardahan, and as far as the Sarıkamış region.[169] However, at the beginning of the summer of 1920, after the Turkish National Movement organised and began to mobilise troops on the eastern border under the leadership of Kazım Karabekir, tensions began to rise. Ultimately, in September 1920, Nationalist forces embarked on an offensive towards the tiny Armenian state, thus starting the four-month Turkish–Armenian War.

Ottoman Armenians and the Road to the Turkish–Armenian War

There was a common belief among Ottoman Armenians that if the Vilayât-ı Sitte were one day to be wrested from the Ottoman administration, the Republic of Armenia's army would be its sole liberator. The majority were confident that no other foreign power would occupy those provinces, so mountainous and far from the coastal areas. Thus, Ottoman Armenians considered supporting the Republic of Armenia's military as their contribution to the future annexation of the Vilayât-ı Sitte. From the beginning of 1920, Ottoman Armenians initiated several fundraising campaigns to channel aid to the Armenian military. During the early days of 1920, a meeting took place at the Armenian National Assembly in the Galata neighbourhood of Istanbul to launch an extensive fundraising campaign for the Armenian military. Thirty-six Armenian associations, together with all Armenian political parties,

[168] Gwynne Dyer, 'The Turkish Armistice of 1918 1: The Turkish Decision for a Separate Peace, Autumn 1918', *Middle Eastern Studies* 8 (1972), 143–78; Gwynne Dyer, 'The Turkish Armistice of 1918 2: A Lost Opportunity: The Armistice Negotiations of Moudros', *Middle Eastern Studies* 8 (1972), 313–48; Albert Howe Lybyer, 'Turkey under the Armistice', *The Journal of International Relations* 12 (1922), 447–73; Erik Jan Zürcher, 'The Ottoman Empire and the Armistice of Moudros', in *At the Eleventh Hour: Reflections, Hopes and Anxieties at the Closing of the Great War, 1918*, Peter H. Liddle and Hugh Cecil, eds. (Barnsley: Leo Cooper, 1998), 266–76.

[169] Donald Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide: Imperialism, Nationalism, and the Destruction of the Ottoman Armenians* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 144–6; Gökay, 'Turkish Settlement and the Caucasus, 1918–20', 54.

elected to establish a central fundraising committee. For example, Izmir Armenians, besides fundraising activities, ran a campaign for the donation of socks for the Armenian military.[170] In a single day, the fundraising campaign in Izmir gathered 3,000 Ottoman liras.[171] Armenians in Konya – mostly refugees living in tents in the vicinity of the Konya railway station – collected 700 socks to send to the Armenian military.[172]

The central committee for fundraising included Armenian activists Armenag Horigyan, Kalusd Eynatyan, Vrtanes Mardigyan, and Araksi Varujan. The committee decided at its first meeting that the collection of clothing for the military would be organised by the Armenian Red Cross and the Women's League. Moreover, the Vartanants Feast – celebrating the battle in which the Armenians defended themselves against the Persians – was declared as the day to honour the military, on which ceremonies would be held at schools and donations would be collected. On Christmas Day and subsequently, boxes were placed in the courtyards of churches and an announcement was made to the wider Armenian community to collect cigarettes and tobacco for the Armenian military.[173]

In Bursa, Armenian students declined their Christmas gifts of *simit* (bagels), asking their teachers to instead donate the simit money to the Armenian military.[174] On Christmas Day, around 60 packages of cigarettes, 10 packages of tobacco, and 10,000 liras were delivered to the Kumkapı Church in Istanbul. In Gedikpaşa, during the two days, around 40 packages of cigarettes and 3,000 liras were donated. Similarly, in other districts of Istanbul such as Kadıköy, Yenikapı, and Ortaköy, donations were made, totalling more than 100 liras.[175] Regardless of political affiliation, the Ottoman Armenians participated

[170] *Jagadamard*, Հայ Բանակին Օգնելու Համար (Hay Panagin Oknelu Hamar) [To Help the Armenian Military], 2 January 1920, no. 244.
[171] *Jagadamard*, Մեր Պարտքը Հայ Բանակին (Mer Bardkě Hay Panagin) [Our Debt to the Armenian Military], 3 January 1920, no. 245.
[172] *Jagadamard*, Մեր Պարտքը Հայ Բանակին (Mer Bardkě Hay Panagin) [Our Debt to the Armenian Military], 7 January 1920, no. 349.
[173] *Jagadamard*, Մեր Պարտքը Հայ Բանակին (Mer Bardkě Hay Panagin) [Our Debt to the Armenian Military], 17 January 1920, no. 357.
[174] *Jagadamard*, Մեր Պարտքը Հայ Բանակին (Mer Bardkě Hay Panagin) [Our Debt to the Armenian Military], 22 January 1920, no. 362.
[175] *Jagadamard*, Մեր Պարտքը Հայ Բանակին (Mer Bardkě Hay Panagin) [Our Debt to the Armenian Military], 23 January 1920, no. 361.

in the donation campaigns 'to fulfil their national duties toward their fatherland'.[176]

Throughout the first half of 1920, the fundraising campaigns continued among the Armenian communities in the Ottoman Empire. In September, before the outbreak of war between the Nationalists and the Armenian state, Armenians in Istanbul participated in փոխառութիւն (pokharutyun), a loan campaign for the Armenian government. A number of community associations in Istanbul contributed to the effort. The loan campaign was to cover the urgent pecuniary needs of the Armenian military to purchase weapons and ammunition. For this purpose, Armenians of the Pera district gathered at the Skating Palace[177] and held a fundraising evening for the Armenian state. A prominent member of the Armenian community in Pera, A. Arsenyan, highlighted that participating in the fundraising event was the duty of each Armenian towards the fatherland. Following these remarks, another prominent community member, Hovhannes Amaduni, added that, as the Armenian soldiers and volunteers who fought for the Armenian state's independence had fulfilled their duties, it was now time for those who had not fought on the battlefield to pay their own debts. At the end of the night, 5,000 Ottoman liras were collected from the community.[178] Even though it was named a loan campaign, the aim was in truth more focused on fundraising and donations, with the moneylenders knowing that it was highly unlikely that they would be repaid. During the gathering on Kınalı Island, Mr. Khojasaryan argued along similar lines that, while the Armenians in the Caucasus and Anatolia had fought for the Armenian state's independence and paid their 'blood debts', Istanbul Armenians had not participated in the struggle on the ground. Therefore, he argued

[176] *Jagadamard*, Պզտիկ Հայաստանն Ալ Վաւերացուցած Են (Bzdig Hayasdann Al Vaveratsutsadz En) [Little Armenia Is Also Recognised], 27 January 1920, no. 364.

[177] The Skating Palace was constructed in 1884 originally as the Hunters Club of Constantinople. In 1909, the building was used as a circus, and later it was transformed into an entertainment centre in which there was also a theatre. During the Republic period, it served as a movie theatre. More recently, it was known as Emek Sineması, which was demolished by the municipality in 2013 for the purpose of building a shopping mall.

[178] *Jagadamard*, Փոխառութեան Բացումը Պոլսոյ Մէջ (Pokharutyan Patsumĕ Bolsoy Mech) [Opening of Loan Campaign in Istanbul], 1 September 1920, no. 542.

that it was time for Istanbul Armenians to pay their own 'blood debts' by taking part in the loan campaign. Eleven thousand Ottoman liras were subsequently collected on Kınalı Island.[179]

For Istanbul Armenians, the campaign for the Armenian military was a historic moment to show their support to the Armenians in the Caucasus. Benon Deyirmenjiyan, a prominent member of the Armenian community in Kuruçeşme, argued that even though the Armenians in Istanbul constituted only 10 per cent of the total population, 35 per cent of the city's economy was in the hands of Armenian merchants. Therefore, he noted that if Istanbul Armenians gave just 2 per cent of their wealth, more than one million liras would be generated by the loan campaign.[180] During the first gatherings of the loan campaign, 46,000 Ottoman liras were collected in the pooled account.[181] This donation campaign was framed as being of vital importance, and those Armenian businessmen who were reluctant to participate in the campaign or made very small donations were targeted for public shaming. Sebuh Sdepanyan, for instance, named those wealthy Armenian men who refused to take part in the loan campaign as 'enemies of Armenia and the Armenian nation'. He ended his article with an open threat, stating that those wealthy Armenians who refused to give their money should not be surprised to see their names on a list titled 'the enemies of Armenia'.[182] These examples demonstrate that the Armenian upper class was forced by the nationalist/patriotic factions of the Armenian community to allocate a portion of its wealth to the Armenian military. An Armenian woman from Bardizag, Dikranuhi Der Simonyan, who worked as a maid in Istanbul for many years, donated her savings of around 50,000 French francs to the Armenian government for the purpose of helping to fund the construction of an Armenian orphanage in Armenia. The Armenian Patriarch Zaven acknowledged her selfless donation and hoped that it would become a model for the Armenian upper class.[183]

[179] Ibid. [180] Ibid. [181] Ibid.

[182] *Jagadamard*, Հայաստանի Դշնամիները (Hayasdani Tshnamineře) [The Enemies of Armenia], 29 September 1920, no. 566.

[183] *Jagadamard*, Հայ Սպասուհի Մը 50,000 Ֆրանք Կը Նուիրէ Հայաստանի Կառավարութեան (Hay Sbasuhi Mě 50,000 Frank Gě Nuire Hayasdani Garavarutyan) [An Armenian Maid Donates 50,000 Francs to the Armenian State], 9 October 1920, no. 575.

Beginning of the Nationalist Offensive

Given that the offensive of the Nationalist forces was inevitable and the aggressiveness of the Bolshevik and Tatar forces was evident, the Armenian government sought to secure the Allied Powers' support in preparation to defend its borders. Nevertheless, no Allied government expressed any inclination to back the Armenian government, arguing that a new military campaign in the Caucasus would create unnecessary financial burdens for them.[184]

On the Nationalists' side, in a speech given in front of the Turkish Parliament in Ankara, Mustafa Kemal reported that the commander of the Eastern Army had sent letters stating that the local Muslim population in Armenia was in danger of massacre and that Armenians were positioning themselves to take Erzurum at the earliest opportunity.[185] In response, he gave orders to the Eastern Army to prepare for an attack to occupy Sarıkamış, Oltu, and Soğanlı, which were already Ottoman territory according to the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk.[186] Georgy Chicherin of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union assured the Ankara government that the disagreements regarding the borders between the Turkish and Armenian governments could be solved through diplomatic negotiations; however, Mustafa Kemal asserted that they had rights to the Kars, Oltu, and Ardahan regions and their occupation was thus legitimate.[187] When Bekir Sami, the foreign minister of the Ankara government, protested the military operations against the Turkish Muslim communities in the Oltu region by Armenian forces in June 1920, the

[184] *Jagadamard*, Հայաստանի Լիազօրը Պոլիս Կը Դառնայ Իր Երկրամսեայ Պտոյտէն (Hayasdani Liazorě Bolis Gě Tarnay Ir Ergramsyay Bduyden) [The Representative of Armenia Returns from His Trip to Istanbul], 8 September 1920, no. 547.

[185] Stanford J. Shaw, *From Empire to Republic: The Turkish War of National Liberation 1918–1923: A Documentary Study*, vol. 3, part 2 (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2000), 1488.

[186] Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide*, 150; Panossian, *The Armenians from Kings and Priests*, 245.

[187] *Jagadamard*, Մուսթաֆա Քէմալի Ճառը (Mustafa Kemali Jarě) [The Solution of Mustafa Kemal], 2 October 1920, no. 569. In January 1920, it was reported that a Turkish unit consisting of 250 soldiers under the command of Mehmet Bey crossed the border and settled in the Zankipasar region. See Edik Artemi Zohrabyan, *1920 թ. թուրք-հայկական պատերազմը և տերությունները* (1920 T. Turk-Haykakan Baderazmě Ew Terutyunnerě) [The Turkish-Armenian War of 1920 and the Powers] (Yerevan: Oskan Yerevantsi, 1997), 19–20.

Armenian government responded that the operations were carried out against bands in the regions but had not targeted Muslims. Moreover, the Armenian government claimed that it had handed the administration of municipalities to local Muslims in the Oltu region.[188] Ultimately, the primary obstacle for the Nationalist authorities was, as Bülent Gökay highlights, that the Armenian state prevented Nationalist supply lines from accessing much-needed war materials from Russia.[189] *Jagadamard* postulated that the offensive of the Nationalist forces sought to accomplish two primary objectives: first, recapturing Kars, Ardahan, and Batum, which were given to the Ottomans by the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk; second, establishing a land connection with Azerbaijan in order to receive military and financial support from the Bolsheviks.[190] Conversely, *Peyam-ı Sabah* presented in an editorial that the Nationalists' offensive was a tactical move designed to produce certain guaranteed victories, pre-emptively guarding against potential internal opposition.[191]

By early September, Kazım Karabekir, Ottoman commander of the Eastern Front, had organised Muslim volunteer groups beyond the Armenian border and prepared his troops for offensive measures.[192] Armenian intelligence reported that Turkish aerial reconnaissance had increased along the border area and some units were crossing the border, making contact with Armenian security forces.[193] According to Ottoman Turkish papers, around 8,000 soldiers were sent to the front from the Black Sea region, including 1,000 each from the cities of Samsun, Rize, and Trabzon.[194]

[188] Al. Khatisyan, Հայաստանի Հանրապետութեան Ծագումն Ու Զարգաճումը (Hayasdani Hanrabedutyan Tsakumn U Zarkatsumě) [The Birth and Development of the Republic of Armenia] (Beirut: Hamazkayin Dbaran, 1968), 256.

[189] Gökay, 'Turkish Settlement and the Caucasus, 1918–20', 61.

[190] *Jagadamard*, Թուրք Յարձակողականը (Turk Hartsagoghaganě) [The Turkish Offense], 8 October 1920, no. 574.

[191] *Peyam-ı Sabah*, Ermenistan-Milliciler Muharebesi [The Battle between Armenia and Nationalists], 15 October 1920, no. 11101.

[192] S. Vratsyan, Հայաստանը Բոլշեւիկեան Մուրճի Եւ Թրքական Սալի Միջեւ (Hayasdaně Polshevigyan Murjě Ew Trkagan Sali Michev) [Armenia between Bolshevik Hammer and Turkish Anvil] (Beirut: Hamazkayin Dbaran, 1953), 107–8.

[193] Richard G. Hovannisian, *The Republic of Armenia Vol. IV: Between Crescent and Sickle: Partition and Sovietization* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 4, 185.

[194] *Vakit*, Ermenistan'a Taaruz Ne Halde? [What Is the Stage of Offense Towards Armenia?], 15 October 1920, no. 1024.

During the Congress of the Peoples of the East, hosted in Baku in September 1920, the Turkish National government secured a guarantee from the Bolsheviks that they would not stand in the way of a Turkish occupation of Kars, Ardahan, and Batum.[195] The only point of concern for Mustafa Kemal was the uncertainty of Georgian policy in the case of a war between the Nationalists and the Armenian government. Therefore, the Turkish committee, headed by Yusuf Kemal (Tengirşenk), paid a discreet visit to Tiflis, staying at Hotel d'Orient.[196] The Turkish delegation held a meeting with Georgia's President Noe Zhordania and Minister of Foreign Affairs Evgeni Gegechkori to make certain the country's position should it come to a war.[197] After two days, Yusuf Kemal returned to Baku with the assurance that the Georgians would remain neutral if conflict were to break out and would not enter the war on the Armenian side.[198] At the beginning of September, Bekir Sami reported that the diplomatic arrangements were made and the path was cleared for the Turkish army to begin its offensive.[199]

[195] *Jagadamard*, Հայեւթուրք Պատերազմին Ընթացքը (Hay-ew-Turk Baderazmin Ěntatskě) [The Pace of Turkish–Armenian War], 26 October 1920, no. 589. Before the Baku Conference, on 24 August, the Nationalist representatives signed an agreement with the Bolsheviks in Moscow. See Gabriel Lazyan, Հայաստան Եւ Հայ Դատը Հայեւռուս Յարաբերութիւններու Տակ (Hayasdan Ew Hay Datě Hay-ew-Rus Haraberutiwnneru Dag) [Armenia and the Armenian Cause Under the Armenian-Russian Relations] (Adana: Yerevan), 255–6.

[196] *Verchin Lur*, Հայաստանի Վրայ Յարձակումը (Hayasdani Vray Hartsagumě) [Offense Towards Armenia], 19 October 1920, no. 2006.

[197] *Vakit*, 'Taarruz Nasıl Karar Verilmiş?' [How Was the Offensive Decided?], 20 October 1920, no. 1029; Galust Galoyan, Հայաստանը Եվ Մեծ Տերությունները *1917–1923* ԹԹ. (Hayasdanĕ Ew Mets Terutyunnerĕ) [Armenia and the Great Powers 1917–1923)] (Yerevan: Gitutyun, 1999), 315; Khatisyan, Հայաստանի Հանրապետութեան Ծագումն Ու Զարգաճումը [The Birth and Development of the Republic of Armenia], 307.

[198] *Jagadamard*, Ինչպէս Որոշուեցաւ Յարձակողականը Հայաստանի Դէմ (Inchbes Oroshuetsav Hartsagumě Hayasdani Tem) [How Was the Offense Towards Armenia Decided?], 20 October 1920, no. 584; Edik Artemi Zohrabyan, Սովետական Ռուսաստանը Եվ Հայ-Թուրքական Հարաբերությունները *1920–1922* ԹԹ. (Sovetakan Rusasdanĕ Ew Hay-Turkakan Haraperutyunnerĕ 1920-1922 TT.) [Soviet Russia and Turkish–Armenian Relations 1920–1922] (Yerevan: EBH Hrat., 1979), 101.

[199] *Jagadamard*, Ինչպէս Որոշուեցաւ Յարձակողականը Հայաստանի Դէմ (Inchbes Oroshuetsav Hartsagumě Hayasdani Tem) [How Was the Offense Towards Armenia Decided?], 20 October 1920, no. 584.

In the middle of September, the Nationalist forces under the command of Kazım Karabekir initiated an aggressive offensive towards the Oltu front, with the objective of taking Sarıkamış as soon as possible. Meanwhile, the Bolshevik forces began an offensive from the north-eastern border of Armenia, mainly the Ghazah region. When the Turkish offensive was launched against Sarıkamış, the Armenian border security units withdrew without resistance.[200] Armenian forces, outnumbered by the Bolsheviks and Nationalists, eventually pulled back from both fronts. On 26 September 1920, the Central Committee of the ARF in Tiflis issued a public statement calling for the Armenian nation 'to unite and fight' against the Turkish offensive.[201] Following the statements of the committee urging the mobilisation of Armenian volunteers, thousands of Armenian men enlisted to join the front.[202] The Armenian government announced the full mobilisation of the nation, and Armenian men up to the age of thirty-five were sent to the front. Even ministers of the government joined the troops on the fronts.[203]

In Tiflis, the Armenian community organised Փրկութեան Կոմիտե (salvation committees), which were responsible for the mobilisation of

[200] *Zhoghovurti Tsaynĕ*, Ի՞նչպէս Դաւաճանօրէն Հայ Զօրքը Նահանչեց (Inchbes Tavajanoren Hay Zorkĕ Nahanchets) [How Did the Armenian Army Betray and Fall Back?], 4 January 1921, no. 680; Kazemzadeh, *The Struggle for Transcaucasia*, 288.

[201] *Jagadamard*, Դաշնակցութեան Կոչը (Tashnagtsutyan Gochĕ) [Statement of ARF], 19 October 1920, no. 583.

[202] *Jagadamard*, Համահայկական Բողոքի Ցոյց Թիֆլիսի Մէջ (Hamahaygagan Poghoki Tsuyts Tiflisi Mech) [Pan-Armenian Protest in Tbilisi], 19 October 1920, no. 583; *Vakit*, 'Ermenistan'ın Millicilere İlan-ı Harbi' [Declaration of War by Armenia to the Nationalists], 10 October 1920, no. 1019. The first president of the Republic of Armenia, Hovhannes Kajaznuni – whose two sons Ashot and Aram died while serving in the military, the former in 1918 in Karakilise and the latter in 1920 in Zankipasar – registered as a volunteer. See *Verchin Lur*, Հերոսական Հայաստան (Herosagan Hayasdan) [Heroic Armenia], 18 October 1920, no. 2005; Ararat Hakobyan, Հայաստանի Խորհրդարանը Եվ Քաղաքական Կուսակցությունները *(1918–1920)* (Hayasdani Khorhrdaranĕ Ew Kaghakakan Kusaktsutyunnerĕ (1918–1920)) [The Parliament of Armenia and the Political Parties (1918–1920)] (Yerevan: HHD Hrat., 2005), 310.

[203] *Jagadamard*, 27 October 1920, no. 590; Hovannisian, *The Republic of Armenia: Between Crescent and Sickle*, 4, 200. Minister of Labour Vratsyan went to Kars, Minister of Economy Abraham Gyulhandanyan went to Dilijan, Minister of Communications Arshak Camalyan and Minister of Education Kevork Ghazaryan went to Gyumri, and Minister of Interior Affairs Sarkis Araradyan went to the Iğdır front.

volunteers and fundraising for the Armenian military. Similar to the salvation committees organised in Tiflis, Armenians in Istanbul organised loan campaigns. While the salvation committees in Tiflis had the authority to compel Armenian individuals to make a donation to the military or to enlist in the army as privates, it was voluntary in Istanbul. *Jagamadard* suggested the formation of salvation committees in Istanbul as well to accelerate the fundraising and recruitment campaigns. It was time, *Jagamadard* declared, for the Armenian community to 'spend even their last pennies to save the motherland'.[204]

The Turkish offensive towards Kars started under the command of Kazım Karabekir on 27 October.[205] In Kars, the Nationalists met with no resistance, with the Armenian army of 26,000 soldiers withdrawing, of which 1,500 surrendered. Artillery units in Kars did not fire upon the Nationalist forces, and no serious clashes took place, leaving the people of Kars in disbelief when they saw Turkish Nationalist forces entering their city.[206] More than 100 prominent officers were held hostage; additionally, around 100,000 sacks of wheat, flour, and rice, 60,000 sacks of sugar, and thousands of weapons, bombs, cannons, and cases of ammunition were left in the hands of the Nationalists.[207] Armenian junior officers and enlisted men who were captured were taken to the railway station and transported to labour camps in Erzurum.[208]

Ottoman Armenians during the Clashes

Following the first clashes between the Nationalists and the Armenian military, Ottoman Armenians initiated a new donation campaign publicised in the Armenian press, titled 'Everything for the Front'. *Jagadamard* reported that the campaign elicited strong support from

[204] *Jagadamard*, Փրկութեան Կոմիտեները (Prgutyan Gomidenerě) [Salvation Committees], 19 October 1920, no. 583.

[205] Shaw, *From Empire to Republic*, 1489.

[206] *Verchin Lur*, Հայաստանի Վերջին Դէպքերը (Hayasdani Verchin Tebkerě) [The Latest Events in Armenia], 25 December 1920, no. 2060; *Vakit*, 'Kars Kalesi'nin Sükutu' [The Conquest of Kars Citadel], 9 November 1920, no. 1049.

[207] *Zhoghovurti Tsaynĕ*, Հայաստանի Վերջին Աղետը (Hayasdani Verchin Aghedĕ) [The Latest Catastrophe in Armenia], 26 January 1921, no. 697; *Peyam-ı Sabah*, 'Ermenistan Ne Halde?' [What Is the Situation in Armenia?], 2 December 1920, no. 11146.

[208] Hovannisian, *The Republic of Armenia: Between Crescent and Sickle*, 4, 259; Kazemzadeh, *The Struggle for Transcaucasia*, 288.

the Istanbul Armenian community, both wealthy and poor. For instance, according to *Jagadamard*, an Armenian porter, Penyamin Safaryan, who was working at the Mahmudiye Han (Mahmudiye Inn) in Istanbul, donated twenty-five Ottoman liras. He said that since the Armenian government had not recruited him for the military, he wanted to 'pay his debt to the fatherland' with this money.[209] Officials of the Armenian government proposed to members of the donation committees for the Armenian military in Istanbul that they unite as one organisation, the National Defence Association, in the same fashion that the Turkish National Movement had organised its bodies. The National Defence Association planned to have headquarters in Istanbul and organise every aspect of support for the Armenian military, from preparing the lists of volunteers to organising communications with government officials.[210]

Jagadamard proclaimed that the Armenian state was 'in danger of complete destruction' and urged Istanbul Armenians to join the struggle by following the example of Poland, where thousands of Polish women had organised self-defence units and thousands of Polish men defended their fatherland on the front lines against Soviet Russia and Soviet Ukraine in 1920.[211] *Verchin Lur* initiated a donation campaign under the slogan of 'One Day's Wage from Each Man'. The workers of *Verchin Lur* itself gave the first donations to the campaign.[212] In Pera, Kumkapı, and Kadıköy, Armenian teachers and students participated in the campaign. The Armenian Patriarch Zaven thanked the paper for initiating such campaigns and personally donated ten Ottoman liras.[213] Armenian orphans, too, joined in the donation campaigns.

[209] *Jagadamard*, Ամէն Բան Ճակատի Համար (Amen Pan Jagadě Hamar) [Everything for the Front], 20 October 1920, no. 584.

[210] *Jagadamard*, Ազգային Պաշտպանութիւն (Azkayin Bashdbanutiwn) [National Defence], 21 October 1920, no. 585.

[211] *Jagadamard*, Հայրենիքը Վտանգի Մէջ Է (Hayrenikě Vdanki Mech E) [The Fatherland Is Under Danger], 22 October 1920, no. 586.

[212] *Verchin Lur*, Ճակատը Պողպատենք (Jagadě Boghbadenk) [Let's Fortify the Front], 26 October 1920, no. 2012.

[213] *Verchin Lur*, Ճակատը Պողպատենք (Jagadě Boghbadenk) [Let's Fortify the Front], 28 October 1920, no. 2014; *Verchin Lur*, Ճակատը Պողպատենք (Jagadě Boghbadenk) [Let's Fortify the Front], 29 October 1920, no. 2015. It should be noted that according to the money exchange table published in *Verchin Lur*, one Ottoman lira was equal to approximately four American dollars. See *Verchin Lur*, Արժեթուղթեր (Arzhetughter) [Securities], 11 November 1920, no. 2026.

For instance, in the Bezazyan school in Makriköy, the Armenian orphans asked the director to donate the total value of one month's food to the Armenian military, choosing to eat only dry bread. The director refused on the grounds that they should eat adequately for their health and instead he donated a significant amount to the military on behalf of the orphans. A few days later, the Armenian orphans collected the cheese that they were getting for breakfast, and one of the orphans attempted to sell the cheese in Makriköy shops in order to donate the income to the military. The director donated a second amount to convince the orphans that they had made an ample donation already.[214] Similarly, the director of the Aramyan-Uncuyan school, M. Shamdanjiyan, stated in a letter sent to *Verchin Lur* that all of the students refused to eat fruit and demanded that their families donate the equivalent value to the Armenian military; some of them even went days without eating anything.[215]

The Ottoman Armenians in not only Istanbul but also the remote parts of Anatolia were engaged in the donation campaigns. On 8 November, the Armenians of Biga, a small town in Çanakkale, organised a fundraising campaign for the Armenian military, collecting 500 Ottoman liras. The committee highlighted that the Armenians in Biga were disappointed with the actions of the Armenian government and felt that they had not sufficiently paid their debts to the fatherland; with the fundraising they hoped to fulfil their duties. Students in the Armenian school in Biga collected twelve liras and participated in the fundraising event.[216] Students of the Armenian orphan Karagözyan school in Istanbul, after hearing the news that the Armenian army was defeated on the Kars front, refused to eat their daily food and asked the administrators to donate the food money (around twenty-five liras) to the Armenian military.[217] After the fall of Kars and Gyumri, the

[214] *Verchin Lur*, Իրենց Պանիրը Կը Ծախեն Ճակատին Համար (Irents Banirě Gě Tsakhen Jagadin Hamar) [They Sell Their Cheese for the Front], 6 November 1920, no. 2022.

[215] *Verchin Lur*, Անօթի Կը Մնան Պտուղէ Կը Զրկուին (Anoti Gě Mnan Gě Zrguin) [Staying Hungry, Depriving Themselves of Their Fruit], 5 November 1920, no. 2021.

[216] *Jagadamard*, Պիղացին Եւ Ճակատը (Bighatsin Ew Jagadě) [The People of Biga and the Front], 13 November 1920, no. 605.

[217] *Jagadamard*, Զրկումի Օրը Գարակէօզեան Որբանոցի Մէջ (Zrgumi Orě Karageozyan Orpanotsi Mech) [A Day of Deprivation at the Karagözyan Orphanage], 14 November 1920, no. 606.

Armenian community in Bursa declared a state of mourning on 14 November; no Armenian in the city opened their shop on that day, and a religious rite was held in the Armenian church 'honouring the Armenian martyrs who fought on the battlefield against the Nationalist forces'.[218]

Fall of Gyumri

After the Armenian military's defeat in Kars, leaving soldiers and citizens alike begging for peace, the Armenian government was advised by long-serving politicians and military officers such as Hovhannes Kajaznuni Tovmas Nazarbekyan, and Ruben Ter-Minasyan to sign a ceasefire agreement.[219] On 1 November, when the Armenian Parliament convened in Yerevan, the president spoke on behalf of the government and declared that, despite the military defeats, they would continue fighting against the Turks until the last Armenian unit. Regardless of their political affiliations, members of the parliament applauded this speech for minutes.[220] Ignoring the calls for a ceasefire, the Armenian government made a public announcement, calling upon the whole nation 'to fight to the end'.[221] After the fall of Kars, nonetheless, the Nationalist forces marched fifty kilometres to Gyumri. With their military forces spread thinly across much territory, the Armenian government asked for a ceasefire on 6 November.

While Khatisyan was discussing peace terms with the Nationalists in Gyumri, the Bolsheviks made a proposal to the Vratsyan government. They offered the return of Nakhichevan, Karabakh, and all other Turkish-occupied areas to the Armenians if they accepted Bolshevik authority. However, Vratsyan rejected this offer, and the Bolsheviks ordered Commander Gasyan to march on Yerevan. The Armenian Bolsheviks' offensive started from the north-eastern border; soon the forces occupied the Dilijan region and declared that the Bolsheviks had taken control of the country and that the ARF was 'the enemy of the

[218] *Jagadamard*, Սուգի Օրը Պրուսայի Մէջ (Suki Orě Brusayi Mech) [Mourning Day in Bursa], 20 November 1920, no. 611.
[219] Hovannisian, *The Republic of Armenia: Between Crescent and Sickle*, 4, 263.
[220] *Jagadamard*, Ի՞նչպէս Ինկաւ Կարսը (Inchbes Ingav Garsě) [How Did Kars Fall?], 16 November 1920, no. 607.
[221] *Jagadamard*, Հայ Կառավարութեան Կոչը Հայ Ժողովուրդին (Hay Garavarutyan Gochě Hay Zhoghovurtin) [The Statement of the Armenian Government to the Armenian People], 16 November 1920, no. 607.

Armenians'. The Moscow administration assigned an army of 10,000 soldiers to support Gasyan. Discussions were held in the Armenian Parliament and the majority agreed on making peace accords with both the Bolsheviks and the Nationalists to put an end to the war.[222] The agreement was signed on 2 December, the same day Khatisyan was signing the agreement with the Turkish Nationalists in Gyumri.[223]

On 6 December, after the Bolsheviks wrested control of the country, the arrest of prominent Armenian politicians began.[224] The ARF leaders were imprisoned, particularly those who strongly opposed the Bolsheviks. On 10 January, General Tro and his officers were exiled to Russia, and seventy prominent officers of the Armenian military were exiled to Baku. On 24 January, 1,200 Armenian military officers,

222 *Vakit*, 'Ermenistan'la Sulh' [Peace With Armenia], 14 December 1920, no. 1082; *Jagadamard*, Հայաստանի Մէջ Կատարուած Վերջին Փոփոխութիւններուն Ամփոփ Պատմութիւնը (Hayasdani Mech Gadaruats Verchin Popoghutiwnnerun Ampop Badmutiwnĕ) [The Complete History of the Recent Developments in Armenia], 14 December 1920, no. 631; Payaslian, 'United States Policy toward the Armenian Question', 751; Kazemzadeh, *The Struggle for Transcaucasia*, 288–92; Hakobyan, Հայաստանի Խորհրդարանը Եվ Քաղաքական Կուսակցությունները [The Parliament of Armenia and the Political Parties], 41; Gökay, 'Turkish Settlement and the Caucasus, 1918–20', 68.

223 Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide*, 161; Panossian, *The Armenians from Kings and Priests*, 245; Hasan Kayalı, 'The Struggle for Independence', in *The Cambridge History of Turkey*, Reşat Kasaba, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 131; Hovannisian, 'Genocide and Independence 1914–1921', 110; Kazemzadeh, *The Struggle for Transcaucasia*, 289; Vratsyan, Հայաստանը Բոլշեւիկեան Մուրճի Եւ Թրքական Սալի Միջեւ [Armenia Between Bolshevik Hammer and Turkish Anvil], 129–31; Lazyan, Հայաստան Եւ Հայ Դատը Հայեւռուս Յարաբերութիւններու Տակ [Armenia and the Armenian Cause Under Armenian-Russian Relations], 263–4; Zohrabyan, *1920* թ. թուրք-հայկական պատերազմը և տերությունները [The Turkish-Armenian War of 1920 and the Powers], 42–3; *Zhoghovurti Tsaynĕ*, Ռուսիա, Թուրքիա, Հայաստան (Rusia, Turkia, Hayasdan) [Russia, Turkey, Armenia], 21 January 1921, no. 693; *Vakit*, 'Ermenistan'da İkinci Mütareke' [The Second Armistice in Armenia], 2 December 1920, no. 1074; *Vakit*, 'Ermenistan Sulhu' [Armenia's Peace], 23 December 1920, no. 1091; *Verchin Lur*, 23 December 1920, No. 2058; *Zhoghovurti Tsaynĕ*, Հայաստանի Եւ Միլլիհիներու Միջեւ Կնքուած Հաշտութեան Դաշնագիրի Պատճէնը (Hayasdanĕ Ew Millijineru Michev Gnkuats Hashdutyan Tashnakiri Badjenĕ) [Copy of the Agreement Signed between Armenia and the Nationalists], 31 December 1920, no. 677.

224 Kazemzadeh, *The Struggle for Transcaucasia*, 293; Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide*, 161; Panossian, *The Armenians from Kings and Priests*, 246; Gökay, 'Turkish Settlement and the Caucasus, 1918–20', 68; Hovannisian, 'Genocide and Independence 1914–1921', 110.

including commanders Siligyan and Hakhverdyan, were exiled to an unknown location.[225] The Armenian Bolsheviks sent hundreds of waggons of gifts to Lenin to express their gratitude.[226]

Conclusion

During the years of Allied occupation of the Ottoman lands, Ottoman Armenians chose to ally with the Allied forces at the same time that the independent Republic of Armenia did so with the Entente. Caught between Soviet Russia on one side and the Turkish Nationalists on the other, it was a calculated strategic decision. However, in time – as was most evident in the Cilician conflicts – the Allies proved to be unreliable partners, more concerned with their own economic and imperial interests than the fate of the Armenians. A considerable group within the Ottoman Armenian community showed support for the Republic of Armenia. Hundreds of Ottoman Armenian volunteers joined the Armenian military to fight on the front lines against the Nationalists, and those who were not able to join the armed struggle paid their 'national debts', as they wrote, by raising tremendous amounts of money to donate to the Armenian military. The Armenian press and all strata of the Armenian public closely followed the developments on the front lines, which then influenced their actions – for instance, Armenian orphans in Istanbul refused to eat their daily meals to save money to send to the Armenian military, and Armenian individuals, wealthy or poor, took part in the donation campaigns. The Ottoman Armenians' participation in the fundraising campaigns and as volunteers in the Armenian military demonstrates how some Ottoman Armenians, who suffered and survived the

[225] *Jagadamard*, Ի՞նչ Կ՚անցնի Կը Դառնայ Հայաստանի Մէջ (Inch Gantsni Gĕ Tarnay Hayasdani Mech) [What Is Happening in Armenia?], 24 December 1920, no. 640; *Jagadamard*, Կացութիւնը Հայաստանի Մէջ (Gatsutiwnĕ Hayasdani Mech) [The Situation in Armenia], 28 December 1920, no. 643; *Vakit*, 'Ermenistan'da Bolşevik İdaresi' [Bolshevik Administration in Armenia], 29 December 1920, no. 1097; Vratsyan, Հայաստանը Բոլշեւիկեան Մուրճի Եւ Թրքական Սալի Միջեւ [Armenia between Bolshevik Hammer and Turkish Anvil], 143–4; Hovannisian, *The Republic of Armenia: Between Crescent and Sickle*, 4, 404; Khatisyan, Հայաստանի Հանրապետութեան Ծագումն Ու Զարգացումը [The Birth and Development of the Republic of Armenia], 320.

[226] Khatisyan, Հայաստանի Հանրապետութեան Ծագումն Ու Զարգացումը [The Birth and Development of the Republic of Armenia], 326.

genocide, saw salvation in supporting the fledgling Armenian state established in the Caucasus.

Having experienced dispossession and oppression during and after the war, the pro-Armenia stance of the Ottoman Armenians was driven by their quest for liberation as a means of guaranteeing their collective safety. Widespread fundraising campaigns for the young Armenian state's needs and volunteering to fight for the Republic of Armenia were evidence of this stance.

The episode of the French occupation of Cilicia represents a crucial point in the history of the Armistice period for the Ottoman Armenian community. The Armenian community in Cilicia, with the support of most of the Armenian political parties and layers of society, backed the French occupation and provided volunteers for the struggle against the Nationalists. However, after a short period of occupation, the actions of the French authorities proved that the French administration's intention was not to occupy the entire region permanently but to use the occupation as leverage when negotiating with the Turkish National Movement.

The Ottoman Armenians of Cilicia, similar to the other Armenian communities of the Ottoman Empire and the south Caucasus, were strongly pro-Entente. The shared aspiration of the establishment of an Armenian state in Cilicia united all Armenian political parties in the region to support the French government in its occupation endeavour. Furthermore, the great majority of Cilician Armenians were survivors of the genocide who, with the help of the French authorities, found the means to return to their native lands. This fact made the Cilician Armenians pro-French and so they presumed that their salvation would come in working together with the French. Nevertheless, as *Arevelyan Mamul* stated in an editorial on 11 November 1921, the Armenian community in Cilicia acknowledged that the French government 'flawlessly played the role of Judas' and 'betrayed the Armenian nation'. This increasing anger towards the French government affected the level of support the Armenians demonstrated towards the Entente and it inaugurated a change in the Ottoman Armenians' political position. After the Turkish–Armenian War in the Caucasus, the Greco-Turkish War in western Anatolia, and the evacuation of Cilicia by the French, thousands of Armenians fled Anatolian cities and towns. While Armenians in Izmir and the Cilicia region were trying to escape, thousands of Armenians in Istanbul, nearly half of the city's Armenian

population, left the city in fear of the newly enshrined Nationalist administration. Yet, those Armenians who remained adapted to the circumstances in which they found themselves in the Republic of Turkey. The next chapter will address the political change and strategic moves of this particular community of Armenians.

4 *The Transformation of the Armenian Political Position*

For Ottoman Armenians, the signing of the Armistice of Mudros was seen as salvation after the catastrophic years they experienced during World War I. The Ottoman Empire's Christian communities greeted each other on the streets of Pera and celebrated the signing of the Armistice.[1] Many Armenians believed that after the sacrifices their people had made for the Allies, they would be permitted to establish an independent Armenian state in six provinces and hold accountable the Ottoman officials who engineered and orchestrated the Armenian deportations which had resulted in the annihilation of nearly half of the world's Armenian population. Ottoman Armenians supported the Armenian state in their fight against Turkish Nationalists by sending volunteers to the Caucasus and organising donation campaigns to finance and provide material aid to the Armenian army. When French forces occupied the Cilicia region, Ottoman Armenian refugees – those who had been forcefully deported from their native villages in various regions of Anatolia and had survived the massacres – were able to return home. The French occupation received broad support from Armenians living in Cilicia as well as those living in other parts of Anatolia, Istanbul, and Izmir. Majority of them shared the hope that the French would allow the establishment of an Armenian state in Cilicia. However, neither the French nor the British supported the Armenians in Cilicia or the Caucasus in their struggle against the Turkish Nationalists. When the Allied Powers were asked to send military aid to the Armenian government in the Caucasus, they replied that the Caucasus was located far from the Mediterranean and that it would not be feasible to organise the transportation of military aid.[2] Furthermore, when the French came to an agreement with the Ankara

[1] *Verchin Lur*, Այսօրուան խանդավառութիւնը (Aysoruan Khantavarutiwnĕ) [Today's Enthusiasm], 1 November 1918, no. 1407.

[2] *Vakit*, 'Ermeni Meselesinin Tasfiye-i Hesabı' [Winding up of the Armenian Question], 27 June 1918, no. 249.

government, the Armenians whom they had transported to the region from northern Syria at the beginning of the occupation were no longer of any political value to them. Following these developments, Ottoman Armenians were left with two choices: they could either leave the country or stay and change their political position from pro-Armenian /pro-Entente to pro-Turkish.

It was not only the Armenian state in the Caucasus and the French who were defeated by the Nationalists; the Greek army, too, suffered the same fate in western Anatolia. The Greco-Turkish War began in 1919 when Greek troops landed in Izmir. Greek troops occupied cities in western Anatolia but the war resulted in Turkish victory, following the Nationalist army's offensive in 1922.[3] Nationalists' defeat of the Greek army resulted in another wave of immigration. Many Armenians in Izmir and western Anatolia left their homes after the Greek defeat, in fear of retribution at the hands of Turkish Nationalists.[4] It is at this juncture that the Ottoman Armenians who remained in Istanbul and Anatolia formed a new pro-Turkish political position.

Given the atmosphere of insecurity, Ottoman Armenians were left with no choice but to cultivate relationships that facilitated their ability to live in Turkish society. As the ethnic bargaining theory explains, since there was no external support, Ottoman Armenians – as a 'minority' group – had no choice but to accommodate the repressive state. In 1922, there was no state to speak on behalf of Ottoman Armenians' rights. Many Ottoman Armenians who stayed in Turkey, fearing that they would face violence, economic boycott, or forced

[3] For the history of the Greco-Turkish War, see G. F. Abbott, *Greece and the Allies, 1914–1922* (London: Methuen, 1922); Michael Smith, *Ionian Vision: Greece in Asia Minor, 1919–1922* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999); Erik Goldstein, 'Great Britain and Greater Greece 1917–1920', *The Historical Journal* 32(2) (1989), 339–56; Eleftheria Daleziou, 'Britain and the Greek-Turkish War and Settlement of 1919–1923: The Pursuit of Security By "Proxy" in Western Asia Minor' (PhD thesis, University of Glasgow, 2002).

[4] *Arevelyan Mamul*, Ու՞ր Պիտի Երթան Իզմիրի Հայ Գաղթականները (Ur Bidi Ertan Izmiri Hay Kaghtagannerě) [Where Will the Armenian Refugees of Izmir Go?], 10 May 1922, no. 2851; *Arevelyan Mamul*, Իզմիրի Քրիստոնեաներուն Գոյութիւնը Ապահով Չիմերու Վրայ Դրէք Եւ Ամէն Հաշիւ Կը Փակուի (Izmiri Krisdonyanerun Koyutiwně Abahov Himeru Vray Trek Ew Amen Hashiv Gě Pagui) [All Accounts Will Be Closed After You Secure the Existence of Izmir Christians], 16 May 1922; *Arawod*, 170,000 Հոգի Մեկնած են Երեք Ամսուան Մէջ (170,000 Hoki Megnats En Yerek Amsuan Mech) [170,000 People Left in Three Months], 27 November 1922, no. 229.

deportation, altered their political position and openly declared their support for the Turkish National Movement by establishing the Türk-Ermeni Teali Cemiyeti (Association of Turkish–Armenian Fraternity)[5] and publishing articles promoting a return to friendly Turkish–Armenian relations. In order to survive, the Armenian community leadership was forced to take any opportunity available, no matter how bitter the pill.

Emergence of a Pro-Turkish Camp

Following the Greek army's defeat in Anatolia in September 1922, Turkish public opinion dramatically turned against the Armenians and Romioi. To the Turkish public, Armenians and Romioi had supported the Allied occupation during the Armistice years by welcoming the Allied forces' operations. Despite the massacres and atrocities committed against them, after the Greco-Turkish War Armenians found themselves in a position where they were expected to forget the wartime events, find a way to reconcile with the Turks, and prove their loyalty to the Turkish fatherland if they wished to continue to live within the borders of the 'new Turkey'. The view of Turkish intellectuals at the time was that Armenians had been the Ottoman state's loyal subjects before World War I but the Allied Powers had persuaded them to pursue an anti-Turkish campaign by conducting both armed and political struggles against the Turkish nation. Turkish intellectuals suggested that Armenians 'lost the game' and that it was time for them to become 'loyal citizens' or leave the country.[6] Loyalty to the Turkish nation now meant acknowledging Turkish supremacy without question and serving the new Turkish nation's interests by joining the movement of Mustafa Kemal.

Following the French forces' withdrawal from Cilicia and that of the Greek forces from western Anatolia, the majority of the remaining Ottoman Armenians emigrated by September 1922. Only

[5] 'Türk-Ermeni Teali Cemiyeti' directly translates to 'Turkish–Armenian Ascent Association'; however, I have chosen to use the indirect translation of 'Association of Turkish–Armenian Fraternity' to reflect a more accurate meaning in English.

[6] *İkdam*, 'Türkler-Ermeniler' [Turks and Armenians], 9 May 1921, no. 8676; *Alemdar*, 'Türk ve Ermeni Münasebeti' [Turkish–Armenian Relations], 24 May 1921, no. 58.

approximately half of the Armenians in Istanbul and those Armenians who were residing in central Anatolian towns such as Kayseri, Sivas, Yozgat, and Konya chose to stay or could not find the financial and practical means to emigrate. Rather than expect Ottoman Turkish society to acknowledge the Armenian massacres, the remaining Ottoman Armenians, now concentrated in Istanbul, preferred to 'forget' – or at least not prioritise seeking justice for – the wartime massacres, in an effort to re-establish Turkish–Armenian relations. The majority of the remaining Armenian community adopted this attitude. Three different events stand out in this transformation process: first, the departure of the Armenian Patriarch Zaven; second, the establishment of the Association of Turkish–Armenian Fraternity; and third, Ottoman Armenians' responses to the efforts of establishing an Armenian National Home for the Armenian refugees who had been scattered throughout Syria, Lebanon, and Anatolia.[7]

Following the Greeks' loss on the battlefield against Nationalist forces, the Armenian community was divided. One group – those who once vigorously defended independence and supported the occupation by Allied forces, in the hope of a new independent Armenian state in Anatolia – became disheartened and mostly fled the country. Another group of Armenians within the community – those who opined that supporting the Allied Powers had not benefited the Ottoman Armenians – began to lay the groundwork for Turkish–Armenian reconciliation to continue living within the borders of what would soon become the Republic of Turkey. The prominent Armenian politicians Kapriel Noradunkyan and Boghos Nubar, together with the Armenian Patriarch Zaven, were in the first camp. The members of the Association of Turkish–Armenian Fraternity and the intellectuals who

[7] The establishment of an Armenian National Home was proposed by the Armenian delegation during the Lausanne Conference and was supported by the British and Americans as a plan to gather the Ottoman Armenians in an autonomous land within the borders of Turkey. Even though the British and Americans were supportive in the initial stages, neither of them exerted pressure on the Turkish delegation to accept the offer. The Turkish delegation was opposed to the idea and insisted that the Armenians would have equal rights as citizens of the country but that the establishment of a national home was not acceptable. See Lerna Ekmekçioğlu, *Recovering Armenia: The Limits of Belonging in Post-Genocide Turkey* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2016), 109–17; Marashlian, 'The Armenian Question from Sèvres to Lausanne: Economics and Morality in American and British Policies, 1920–1923' (PhD thesis, University of California–Los Angeles, 1992), 711–62.

wrote in papers such as *Verchin Lur*, *Arawod*, and *Zhoghovurti Tsaynĕ* belonged to the second camp. The first camp supported the establishment of an Armenian National Home for Ottoman Armenians to secure the continued existence of the cultural, social, and physical life of the community. The second camp, made up of individuals who supported the rebuilding of Turkish–Armenian friendship, contended that there was no strong rationale for Ottoman Armenians maintaining a pro-Entente position, as allying with them had brought no good for the Armenians. Therefore, they proposed that Ottoman Armenians should again 'become loyal to the Turkish state as they were throughout history'. This camp strongly opposed the establishment of a National Home for Armenians, declaring that the concept did not represent Ottoman Armenians and was actually influenced by 'Western intrigues'. These divisions within the Ottoman Armenian community are reflected in the letters sent to the newspapers by Armenian religious leaders from central Anatolia. For instance, the Armenian bishop of Mamuretülaziz granted an interview with *Vakit*, in which he strongly protested the political stance of Patriarch Zaven. According to the bishop, Armenians in Anatolia had lived in peace and prosperity under the Nationalist administration and had never established alliances with the Greeks in the manner the Patriarch had claimed. He highlighted, 'We, the Anatolian Armenians, want to let Zaven Efendi know that we found great happiness under the protection of the Nationalist governance and we are sure that it will last for good'.[8]

In addition to his statements to the press, the bishop of Mamuretülaziz published an article in which he claimed that the Armenian community in the region lived in prosperity under the Nationalist administration and urged foreign states to stop intervening in the internal affairs of the soon-to-be-established Republic of Turkey. Similarly, prominent members of the Armenian community in Malatya, such as Bishop Sdepan Azaryan, Hacı Agop Geoziwbekyan, Krikor Matakyan, and Sarkis Kurkushyan, signed a declaration which stated that 'the truehearted and great Turkish nation' provided protection for native Armenians and reports that the Christians were oppressed under the Nationalist administration were false.[9] In

[8] *Vakit*, 'Anadolu Ermenilerinden Zaven Efendi'ye Cevap' [Answer of Anatolian Armenians to Zaven Efendi], 1 June 1922, no. 1606.

[9] *İleri*, 'Anadolu Rum ve Ermeni Cemaatlerinin Protestosu' [The Protests of Armenian and Romioi Communities of Anatolia], 4 June 1922, no. 1556.

a similar manner, the Armenian Catholic bishop of Ankara, Nerses Baghdikyan, said that the Ankara government approached all citizens equally and protected the rights of non-Muslims. He affirmed that the Armenians would not forget 'the mercy and complaisance' shown by the Ankara government towards them.[10] Whether these statements from Malatya, Ankara, and Mamuretülaziz were issued under pressure from the Nationalist administration is uncertain.

Importantly, the rhetoric around the political positions of Ottoman Armenians living in Anatolia and Istanbul overlapped with that of a group of Romioi who were supporters of the Turkish National Movement. For example, Pavlos Karahisarithis – a Greek Orthodox bishop from Akdağmağden, Yozgat – led the pro-Turkish movement among the Romioi community in Anatolia. Karahisarithis, who later took the name Papa Eftim, claimed that the Romioi community in Anatolia was living on welfare under the administration of Mustafa Kemal and that those Greeks who occupied Izmir and western Anatolia were traitors influenced by the 'foreign intrigues'. The movement of Papa Eftim resonated among the Romioi community, with more than seventy other Orthodox clerics declaring their support for him.[11] During the Greco-Turkish War, he founded the Turkish Orthodox Church and soon gained considerable support from the Romioi in Anatolia. For instance, in a telegram written by Papa Atanas on behalf of the Romioi community in Samsun, it was underlined that they should accept the authority of the Turkish Orthodox Church but not the Greek Patriarchate in Istanbul. Orthodox Christians of Maçka, Trabzon further wrote in a telegram sent to *Yeni Şark* (New East) that there were no Greeks in Maçka and that they were all Turkish Orthodox who denounced the Greek Patriarchate.[12] Foti Benlisoy argues that the Romioi communities in Anatolia, scared of forced deportation and conscription, adopted such tactics to survive the political turmoil.[13] Thus, like the Romioi communities in Anatolia, Armenians began to voice sentiments

[10] *Vakit*, 'Hristiyanların Mezalim İstinadlarını Reddi' [The Refusal of Christians Regarding the Atrocity Allegations], 5 June 1922, no. 1610.

[11] Alexis Alexandris, *The Greek Minority of Istanbul and Greek-Turkish Relations, 1918–1974* (Athens: Centre for Asia Minor Studies, 1992), 151; Foti Benlisoy, 'Papa Eftim and the Foundation of the Turkish Orthodox Church' (MA thesis, Boğaziçi University, 2002), 5–6.

[12] Ibid., 28. [13] Ibid., 29.

supporting the Turkish National Movement as a means of self-preservation.

Berch Kerestejiyan, a prominent member of the Armenian community and the director of the Osmanlı Bankası (Ottoman Bank), sent a letter to the American-published *Morning Post*, stressing that Armenian politicians had been pressured by the Western powers into pursuing 'wrong politics'.[14] He underlined:

> The Armenians have become the victims of European diplomacy for the last forty years. After the Russo-Turkish War, Russians instigated Armenians against Turks, which brought about a disastrous consequence for them. During the Great War and its aftermath, the British and American politicians tried hard to use Armenians as a vehicle in causing troubles for Turks. Dissecting here how the destitute Armenian nation, who for centuries had managed to get along with Turks, suffered grand agony and shattered in great numbers because of some political extremists who had attached needless importance to political discourses and became tools for politicians, would take extremely long.[15]

Beginning of the Lausanne Conference

The Lausanne Conference opened in November 1922 with the participation of British, French, Italian, and Turkish representatives. In what amounted to a blow from the Entente, Armenian politicians were not invited to participate in the Conference. Beforehand, the Turkish delegation had protested the attendance of the Armenian delegation,

[14] Berch Kerestejiyan (Türker) was born in 1870 in Istanbul. He first attended Galatasaray Lycee, a French-language public school, and later transferred to Robert College, an American private school. After graduation, he served for two years at the Ministry of Finance and was later employed by the Ottoman Bank. He was the co-founder of the Ottoman Red Crescent, which was established in 1911. During World War I, he became the general manager of the Ottoman Bank. During the Armistice years, he actively participated in the National Movement by organising aid campaigns through the Ottoman Red Crescent and providing loans to the Nationalists through his position at the bank. Following the surname reform, Mustafa Kemal bestowed on him the family name Türker (Turk man) in recognition of his patriotism and support for the Nationalist cause. For further information on his biography, see Semi Ertan, 'An Armenian at the Turkish Parliament in the Early Republican Period: Berç Türker-Keresteciyan (1870–1949)' (MA thesis, Sabancı University, 2005).

[15] As reported in *İkdam*, 'Türkler ve Ermeniler' [Turks and Armenians], 17 December 1922, no. 9250.

Figure 4.1 Armenian American-sponsored refugee camp
Project SAVE Armenian Photograph Archives courtesy of Nigoghos Knaian

submitting that if Armenians were permitted to express their ambitions, then Turks would seek the participation of delegations from the Muslim communities in Bulgaria, Greece, Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Iraq, India, Tunisia, Libya, Serbia, and Romania. The participation of the Armenian delegation would be considered by the Turkish state as interference with its own internal affairs.[16] The discussions were held under three sub-commissions: territorial and military questions, financial and economic questions, and the legal status of foreigners in Turkey.

Even though Armenians were officially denied participation in the discussions, two Armenian committees were present at Lausanne, one representing the Armenian government established in the Caucasus and the other representing Ottoman Armenians.[17] Notably, however, the latter delegation was composed of those who had fled the country

[16] *Tanin*, 'İsmet Paşa Hazretlerinin Baş Muharririmize Beyanatı' [Statement of İsmet Paşa to Our Editor in Chief], 28 December 1922, no. 76; *Tevhid-i Efkar*, 'Ermeni Heyetinin İstimaı Meselesinde' [Regarding Hearing the Armenian Delegation], 31 December 1922, no. 3590.

[17] *Jagadamard*, Հայկական Զոյզ Պատուիրակութիւններու Գործունէութիւնը Լօզանի Մէջ (Haygagan Zoyk Baduiragitiwnneru Kordzuneutiwnĕ Lozani Mech) [The Activities of the Two Armenian Delegations in Lausanne], 21 December 1922, no. 1251.

following the Turkish National Movement's victory; as such, some of the Armenians who had remained in Turkey did not consider them to be compatriots who could represent their position. At Lausanne, the Ottoman Armenian delegation set out with three primary aims: firstly, for Armenians to receive the right of exemption from military service in Turkey; secondly, a general pardon for Armenians regarding any political actions that occurred during World War I; and thirdly, the establishment of an Armenian National Home.[18] While the Armenian delegations were not granted permission to attend the sessions, a very brief opportunity was presented to them to express their requests at a minorities subcommittee meeting, which lasted for only one hour and ten minutes.[19] The Armenian committee, representing the Ottoman Armenians at Lausanne, proposed the establishment of an Armenian National Home for the Armenians in an area totalling 17,000 km^2 in the regions of Dörtyol, Payas, and Cebel-i Bereket (see Map 4.1).[20] Initially, the Armenian representatives argued that the Armenian National Home could be established in two alternative areas, which the Muslim population had deserted during the war: the southern region of Cilicia and the border between Turkey and Armenia, an area comprised of the cities of Kars, Ardahan, and Iğdır.[21]

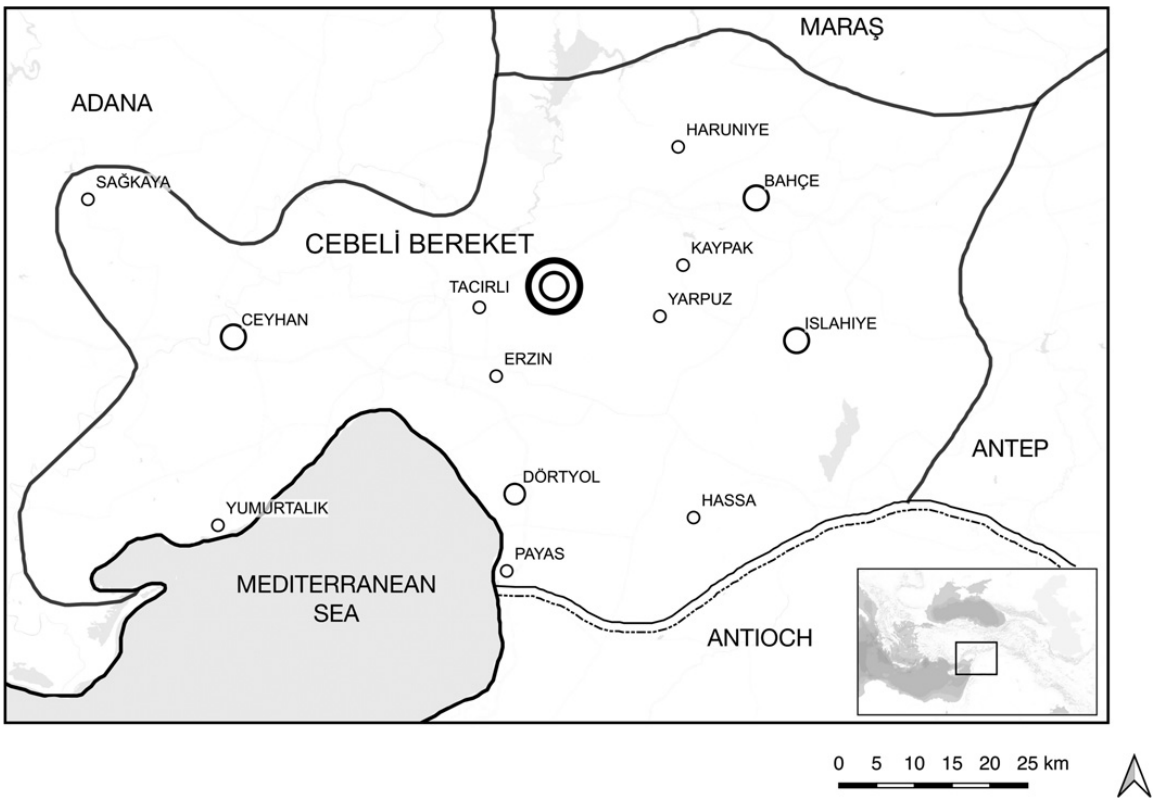
While the discussion on the establishment of an Armenian National Home gained interest in Western circles, Turkish representatives strongly opposed the idea and registered their diplomatic protest. Rıza Nur, one of the Turkish representatives, declared that it was impossible to create 'an artificial Armenian state' within the borders of Turkey, seeing how Armenians did not have a majority in any area of the country. Moreover, he argued that the discussions revolving around the National Home were nothing but 'the intrigues of the

[18] *Jagadamard*, Հայ Պատուիրակներու Պահանջները (Hay Baduiragneru Bahanchnerě) [Demands of the Armenian Delegations], 29 December 1922, no. 1258.

[19] Ekmekçioğlu, *Recovering Armenia,* 90; Marashlian, 'The Armenian Question', 708–12.

[20] *Jagadamard*, Հայ Պատուիրակութիւնները Կը Խորհրդակցին (Hay Baduiragutiwnnerě Gě Khorhrtagtsin) [Armenian Delegations Hold Meetings], 5 January 1923, no. 1264.

[21] *Tanin*, 'Ermeni Murahhaslarının Beyanatı' [The Statements of Armenian Delegates], 31 December 1922, no. 79; Marashlian, 'The Armenian Question', 713.



Map 4.1 The region of Cebel-i Bereket: one of the alternative areas proposed for the Armenian National Home

Figure 4.2 Students and educators at Lord Mayor's Fund Orphanage, Corfu, Greece, 1922
Project SAVE Armenian Photograph Archives

Western powers'.[22] It is noteworthy that following the statements of Rıza Nur, the Armenians in Istanbul and Anatolia also issued statements published in the Turkish and Armenian press, supporting the position of the Ankara government and refuting the need to establish a National Home. For instance, in an article published in *Verchin Lur,* Piwzant Kechyan, an Armenian intellectual and the publisher of Istanbul's *Piwzantion* for twenty-two years, insisted that Armenians in Istanbul and Anatolia had no intention of supporting the efforts of the Armenian delegation in Lausanne to establish an Armenian Home. Instead, they were eager, he writes, to live under the administration of the Ankara government.[23] Similarly, the bishop of Sivas, S. Ajemyan,

[22] *Tevhid-i Efkar*, 'Ermeni Yurdu Hikayesini Ağızlarına Tıktı!' [(He) Put the Armenian National Home Story into Their Mouths!], 8 January 1923, no. 3598; Marashlian, 'The Armenian Question', 709.

[23] *Tevhid-i Efkar*, 'Hala mı Ermeni Yurdu Hikayesi?' [Still the Armenian National Home Story?], 9 January 1923, no. 3599; *Akşam*, 'Istanbul Ermenileri Yurt Istemiyorlar' [Armenians of Istanbul Do Not Want a Home], 9 January 1923, no. 1544.

emphasised that the Armenians in Anatolia rejected the idea of an Armenian National Home and the time and energy spent trying to create one was 'the result of Western intrigues'.[24]

Establishment of the Association of Turkish–Armenian Fraternity

While the Ottoman Armenian delegation led by Kapriel Noradunkyan worked towards the establishment of a National Home for Ottoman Armenians, the community centred in Istanbul embarked on a campaign to build relations between Turks and Armenians. For example, the Garabetyan Society, founded by graduates of the Garabetyan School in 1919, following the Erzurum and Sivas congresses, changed its name to Türk-Ermeni Teali Cemiyeti (Association of Turkish–Armenian Fraternity), with the aim of re-establishing friendship between the 'two brother nations'.[25] As its first order of business, the Association sent a telegram to the Turkish delegation at Lausanne, stating that Ottoman Armenians were eager to find prosperity and the continued protection of their minority rights under the administration of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey.[26] Mustafa Kemal, the leader of the Turkish National Movement, upon receiving the news regarding the establishment of the Association, stated in a telegram: 'By wishing success and especially addressing those young friends, I suggest to them to give up investing much hope in the centuries-long ideas of foreign intervention under the pretext of the Eastern Question, and become sincere, patriotic citizens of Turkey.'[27]

[24] *İkdam*, 'Ermeni Meselesi' [The Armenian Question], 3 March 1923, no. 9326.

[25] Sirvart Malhasyan, 'Istanbul'da 1922 Yılında Kurulan Türk-Ermeni Teali Cemiyeti ve Faaliyetleri' [The Activities of the Association of Turkish–Armenian Fraternity: Istanbul, 1922] (MA thesis, Istanbul University, 2005), 14–20; Ertan, 'An Armenian in the Turkish Parliament', 58–61.

[26] Ekmekçioğlu, *Recovering Armenia,* 110; Ertan, 'An Armenian in the Turkish Parliament', 59–60; *Tevhid-i Efkar*, 'Türkiye Ermenilerinin İsmet Paşaya Telgrafı' [A Telegram of Turkish–Armenians to İsmet Paşa], 29 December 1922, no. 3588.

[27] Malhasyan, 'İstanbul'da 1922 Yılında Kurulan Türk-Ermeni Teali Cemiyeti ve Faaliyetleri' [The Activities of the Association of Turkish–Armenian Fraternity: Istanbul, 1922], 41–2. *Akşam*, 'Türkler ve Ermeniler' [Turks and Armenians], 1 January 1923, no. 1526. *İkdam*, 'Türklerle Ermeniler' [Turks and Armenians], 1 January 1923, no. 9235.

After the Association's establishment, much of the Turkish press did not welcome the efforts of Ottoman Armenians in developing friendship between the two nations. *Tevhid-i Efkar* titled its editorial 'They Are Late', writing, 'Where were the minds of Armenians for the last three years? Do they think that we forgot what they have done?'[28] Furthermore, *İkdam* urged the Armenians in Istanbul and Anatolia to cut their ties with Armenians in the diaspora.[29]

At the beginning of the Lausanne Conference, the Association of Turkish–Armenian Fraternity published a booklet to be distributed locally titled 'Armenians of Turkey' to show that Turkish Armenians supported the Ankara government and that their aim was to promote the Turkish–Armenian relationship.[30] However, the reluctance of the Turkish press and public opinion to accept the sincerity of the Ottoman Armenians continued.[31]

Removal of Patriarch Zaven from His Post

While the Armenian community in Istanbul embarked on a series of attempts to rebuild the Turkish–Armenian friendship, the pressure on the Armenian Patriarch Zaven in Istanbul intensified. Notably, members of the Association of Turkish–Armenian Fraternity strongly opposed the Patriarch's political approach, as he had sided with the Ottoman Armenian delegation at Lausanne, and demanded his resignation. They argued that the Patriarch had been actively involved in politics that were counter to Turkish interests; thus, should he continue to serve as patriarch, Armenian efforts in reaching out to Turkish society to establish friendly relations would be wasted.

[28] Malhasyan, 'İstanbul'da 1922 Yılında Kurulan Türk-Ermeni Teali Cemiyeti ve Faaliyetleri' [The Activities of the Association of Turkish–Armenian Fraternity: Istanbul, 1922], 62.

[29] *İkdam*, 'Ekaliyetler, Ermeniler' [Minorities, Armenians], 30 December 1922, no. 9263.

[30] Lerna Ekmekçioğlu, 'Kalanlar: Savaş Sonrasında ve Tek Parti Döneminde Istanbul Ermeni Cemaati' [Remnants: The Armenian Community of Istanbul in the Post-War and One-Party Period], in *1915: Siyaset, Tehcir, Soykırım*, Fikret Adanır and Oktay Özel, eds. (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2015), 556.

[31] *Tevhid-i Efkar*, 'Ermenilerin Vaziyeti' [The Situation of Armenians], 2 January 1923, no. 3592.

When Refet Paşa came to Istanbul in November 1922, Patriarch Zaven personally welcomed him. Nonetheless, it was reported that Refet Paşa requested the Patriarch's resignation from Berch Kerestejiyan as a step towards normalising the Turkish–Armenian relationship.[32] Tensions surrounding the Patriarch peaked when on 29 November the Turkish press reported that Armenian revolutionaries had arrived in Istanbul to covertly assassinate Nationalist leaders. Following this news, a group of Armenians, led by Harutyun Mosdijyan, visited the Patriarch and demanded his resignation.[33] Yet, Patriarch Zaven responded that now he had devoted himself to rebuilding Turkish–Armenian friendship and was ready to work with the Ankara government.[34] The Patriarch refused to resign, insisting he would do so only following an official decision from the Armenian National Assembly. Subsequently, the Armenian National Assembly gathered to discuss the issue but, with only twenty-eight members present, there was no quorum and it was therefore not possible to hold a vote. Still, the majority of those present supported a call for the Patriarch's resignation.[35] Patriarch Zaven left Istanbul on 9 December 1922 without having tendered his resignation.[36] The strongest candidates for the patriarchal *deghabagh* (locum tenens) position were thought to be Hovhannes Arsharuni, the previous patriarch; Karekin Khachaduryan, the bishop of Trabzon; and Gabriel

[32] Malhasyan, 'İstanbul'da 1922 Yılında Kurulan Türk-Ermeni Teali Cemiyeti ve Faaliyetleri' [The Activities of the Association of Turkish–Armenian Fraternity: Istanbul, 1922], 15; Ekmekçioğlu, *Recovering Armenia,* 87.

[33] Malhasyan, 'İstanbul'da 1922 Yılında Kurulan Türk-Ermeni Teali Cemiyeti ve Faaliyetleri' [The Activities of the Association of Turkish–Armenian Fraternity: Istanbul, 1922], 16.

[34] *Akşam*, 'Ermeni Patrikhanesinde' [At the Armenian Patriarchate], 6 December 1922, no. 1510; *İkdam*, 'Ermeni Patriğinin İstifa Niyeti' [The Resignation Intent of the Armenian Patriarch], 7 December 1922, no. 9240.

[35] *Akşam*, 'Ermeni Patrikhanesinde' [At the Armenian Patriarchate], 10 December 1922, no. 1514; Zaven, Պատրիարքական Յուշերս Վաւերագիրներ Եվ Վկայութիւններ (Badriarkagan Hushers Vaverakirner Ew Vgayutiwnner) [My Patriarchal Memoirs] (Cairo: Nor Asdgh, 1947), 400.

[36] *Akşam*, 'Ermeni Patriği Zaven de İstanbul'dan Kaçtı' [The Armenian Patriarch Zaven Also Fled from Istanbul], 13 December 1922, no. 1517; *Akşam*, 'Zaven Çekildi' [Zaven Stood Back], 11 December 1922, no. 1515; *İkdam*, 'Ermeni Patriği Zaven Kaçtı Gitti' [The Armenian Patriarch Zaven Ran Away], 13 December 1922, no. 9246; *Tevhid-i Efkar*, 'Patrik de Kaçtı!' [The Patriarch Also Fled!], 13 December 1922, no. 3572; *75. Yılda Türkiye Ermenileri* (Istanbul: Türkiye Ermenileri Cemaati 75.Yıl Tertip Heyeti, 1998), 3.

Jevahirjiyan, the previous patriarch's deputy. Surprisingly, though, Bishop Kevork Arslanyan was elected on 20 December as patriarchal locum tenens. He was brought to power by the votes of Armenians who supported friendly relations with the Turkish National Movement.[37]

Activities of the Association of Turkish–Armenian Fraternity

Following the departure of Patriarch Zaven from Istanbul, the Association of Turkish–Armenian Fraternity increased its activities in promoting Turkish–Armenian friendship. Besides political activities, the Association engaged in numerous charity works, such as providing scholarships for both Turkish and Armenian high school and university students, opening a clinic to provide treatment for Turkish and Armenian patients, and publishing works detailing the shared history and culture of Turks and Armenians.[38] Furthermore, they offered all levels of Turkish lessons for any Armenian men and women who were interested.[39] The Association even planned to construct an accommodation centre for university students at Darülfünun (later to be renamed Istanbul University), which was to include conference halls, sports fields, and libraries. However, the project never came to fruition due to a lack of funds.[40]

At the Association's inaugural meeting, the members, especially Armenians, enthusiastically voiced their 'heartfelt sentiments' on the

[37] *Tevhid-i Efkar*, 'Zaven Efendi İstifa Etti' [Zaven Efendi Resigned], 11 December 1922, no. 3570; Malhasyan, 'Istanbul'da 1922 Yılında Kurulan Türk-Ermeni Teali Cemiyeti ve Faaliyetleri' [The Activities of the Association of Turkish–Armenian Fraternity: Istanbul, 1922], 17; Pars Tuğlacı, *Tarih Boyunca Batı Ermenileri 1891–1922* [The Western Armenians Throughout History 1891–1922] (Istanbul: Pars Yayın, 2004), 856; *Tevhid-i Efkar*, 'Ermeni Patrikliği: Arslanyan Efendi Patrik Kaymakamı Oldu' [The Armenian Patriarchate: Arslanyan Efendi Elected as Locum Tenens], 21 December 1922, no. 3580; *Jagadamard*, 21 December 1922, no. 1251.

[38] Malhasyan, 'İstanbul'da 1922 Yılında Kurulan Türk-Ermeni Teali Cemiyeti ve Faaliyetleri' [The Activities of the Association of Turkish–Armenian Fraternity: Istanbul, 1922], 42.

[39] Ibid., 61; *Arawod,* Թուրք Եւ Հայ Բարձրացման Միութիւնը (Turk Ew Hay Partsratsman Miudiwně) [Association of Turkish–Armenian Fraternity], 11 June 1923, no. 90.

[40] *İkdam*, 'Türk Ermeni Teali Cemiyeti' [Association of Turkish–Armenian Fraternity], 9 November 1923, no. 9556; Ekmekçioğlu, *Recovering Armenia,* 110.

beginning of a new friendship.[41] Berch Kerestejiyan, taking the floor in the meeting, said:

> God loves the people living in this country so much that he granted this country to us. Since the constitution of the state, there has been an indestructible friendship between our ancestors. However, within the last 40 years, European politicians have used Armenians as a tool and sown seeds of intrigue between these two elements.

He then concluded with the following words, stuttering and with tears in his eyes: 'Armenians, taking courage from the letter of Commander-in-chief Mustafa Kemal Paşa, plead to the Grand National Assembly of Turkey to show grace in taking the Armenians under its protection!'[42]

On 30 March 1923, the Association organised a tea social (for one of these tea gatherings, see Figure 4.3), which was held in honour of the representatives of the Turkish press and prominent members of the Turkish community, such as Ziya Bey, mayor of Istanbul; Asım Bey, kaymakam of Pera; Celal Bey, former governor of Konya; Necmeddin Sadık Bey, director of *Akşam*; Ahmed Emin Bey, editor-in-chief of *Vatan*; Şükrü Bey, director of *Tercüman*; and Mehmet Asım (Us), director of *Vakit*.[43] In addition, many prominent members of the Armenian community, such as Kevork Arslanyan, the patriarchal locum tenens; Harutyun Mosdijyan, president of the *Cismani Meclis* (Civil Council); Berch Kerestejiyan, director of the Ottoman Bank; Sdepan Gurdikyan, scholar of Turkish, Persian, and Arabic; Sdepan Karayan, professor at Darülfünun; Kevork Torkomyan, principal and faculty head of the technical school focused on silk production in Bursa; and Levon Topalyan and Simon Kayserlyan, businessmen, attended the event. The event opened with remarks by Berch Kerestejiyan:

> I am sure that you will all appreciate the endeavours of our Association in removing the coldness and misunderstandings that occurred lately between the two brother nations living in Turkey for centuries. Indeed, one of the brothers

[41] *Tanin*, 'Türk Ermeni Muhadenet Cemiyeti' [Association of Turkish–Armenian Fraternity], 10 January 1923, no. 94.

[42] *İkdam*, 'Türklerle Ermeniler Arasında Muhadenet Yolunda' [Between Turks and Armenians on the Road for Friendship], 15 January 1923, no. 9279.

[43] *İkdam*, 'Türk Ermeni Cemiyeti' [Association of Turkish–Armenian Fraternity], 31 March 1923, no. 9354.

Figure 4.3 Reception of the Association of Turkish–Armenian Fraternity (*Verchin Lur*, 21 July 1923)
Courtesy of the National Library of Armenia

took the wrong path and followed political aspirations which had upset the big brother, the protector, causing great difficulties. Therefore, by understanding his complete mistake, he now wishes to embrace his big brothers.[44]

For Kerestejiyan, Armenians, being the 'little brothers' of the Turks, had lost their way and had upset their 'big brother' and 'protector'. This framing is important in understanding the reconciliation approach of the Association. Following Kerestejiyan, Harutyun Mosdijyan took the floor and delivered an impromptu speech:

Turks and Armenians were two nations like flesh and blood, but unfortunately some agonising events created coldness between them. All Armenians wish to help that coldness evaporate, and we hope that the Turks also wish the same, because they are our big brothers. However, the efforts of this

[44] *Jagadamard*, Թուրքեւհայ Բարձրացման Միութեան Թեյասեղանը (Turkewhay Partsratsman Miutyan Teyaseghanĕ) [The Tea Event of the Association of Turkish–Armenian Fraternity], 31 March 1923, no. 1336.

Association alone are not enough. The press should also bring its contribution too. Long live Turkey! Long live the noble Turkish nation! Long live the Fatherland! Long live the blood-brothers of this fatherland![45]

Mosdijyan's proclamations mark a turning point in the political position of Turkish Armenians. Two primary factors were responsible for this dramatic change. First, after the disappointments of the Allied Powers during the Turkish–Armenian War in the Caucasus and the French occupation of Cilicia, the majority of Armenians living in Istanbul came to realise that there was no advantage in maintaining a pro-Entente position, but that they would find only more pain, economic breakdown, and political turmoil in which many more Armenians could lose their lives. Therefore, they thought that if they wanted to continue to live in the newly established Turkey, the sole viable solution appeared to be establishing friendly relations with Turks and expressing their 'loyalty to the Turkish nation'. The second reason was economic interest: many Armenians living in Istanbul were not deported during wartime and were thus able to keep their businesses open through the Armistice years. Although the Armenian community in Anatolia suffered during the war, most Istanbul Armenians were less affected. The bulk of Armenian businessmen and intellectuals who stayed in Istanbul and did not leave before the arrival of the Nationalist authorities were aware of the fact that the Armenian refugees in Greece, Syria, Armenia, and other countries did not live in prosperity; therefore, out of self-interest, they made the decision to stay in Istanbul rather than being refugees in foreign countries. These reasons motivated a group within the remaining Armenian population in Istanbul to join the activities of the Association of Turkish–Armenian Fraternity, and the Association quickly swelled to more than 300 members.[46]

Besides the Ankara government's representatives, the Association of Turkish–Armenian Fraternity also established contacts with Caliph Abdülmecid in Istanbul. At a gathering on 18 May 1923 at Tepebaşı Theatre, Caliph Abdülmecid Efendi assigned the orchestras of the

[45] Ibid.

[46] Lerna Ekmekçioğlu also highlights that some Armenians lost faith in any European power's sincerity in helping them. And they tried to distance themselves from diaspora Armenians. See Ekmekçioğlu, *Recovering Armenia,* 91–110.

Ottoman Palace to perform at the event alongside the Association's band. A play was also performed during the gathering.[47] On 24 July 1923, the president of the Association, Ömer Aziz Bey, together with the members of the committee – Dikran Der Nersesyan, Khachig Svajiyan, and Mihran Boyajyan, the former mutasarrıf (district governor) of Rodosto (Tekirdağ) – visited Caliph Abdülmecid at Dolmabahçe Palace. Abdülmecid guaranteed the Association's members that he would provide financial support for their activities. After expressing his support, he stated that 'the events that had happened' between the two nations were caused by the 'intrigues of the Western powers' and that the two brother nations would find a way to live in peace again.[48]

One of the Association's most significant events was the tea reception for the Istanbul deputies of the Ankara government, as had previously been offered to representatives of the Turkish press.[49] The deputies who joined the meeting were Reşid Paşa, Hamdullah Suphi, and Ruşen Eşref Bey. The entire committees of the Türk Ocakları (Turkish Hearths), a Turkish Nationalist organisation, and the Association were also present.[50] Sdepan Karayan took the floor during the event and made a speech emphasising the brotherhood between the two nations. He asserted that the events of the last thirty years were

[47] Malhasyan, 'İstanbul'da 1922 Yılında Kurulan Türk-Ermeni Teali Cemiyeti ve Faaliyetleri' [The Activities of the Association of Turkish–Armenian Fraternity: Istanbul, 1922], 44.

[48] *Verchin Lur*, Թուրքեւհայ Բարձրացման Միութիւնը Վեհափառ Խալիֆային Մօտ (Turkyewhay Partsratsman Miutiwnĕ Vehapar Khalifayin Mod) [The Meeting of the Association of Turkish–Armenian Fraternity with the Caliphate], 25 July 1923, no. 2859.

[49] Malhasyan, 'Istanbul'da 1922 Yılında Kurulan Türk-Ermeni Teali Cemiyeti ve Faaliyetleri' [The Activities of the Association of Turkish–Armenian Fraternity: Istanbul, 1922], 45.

[50] Türk Ocakları (Turkish Hearths) was established by a group of Nationalist Turkish intellectuals who were mostly attached to the CUP in 1912. Following the defeat of the Ottoman Empire in the Balkan Wars and the rise of Turkish Nationalism within the political agenda of the CUP, the activities of the Türk Ocakları gained momentum across the Empire. Many branches were opened in various cities, and publications such as *Halka Doğru* (Towards the People), *Türk Sözü* (Turkish Word), *Yeni Mecmua* (New Journal), and *Büyük Mecmua* (Grand Journal) were published by the Türk Ocakları. Turkish nationalism was propagated in these publications, and the non-Muslim communities were labelled enemies of the state. For detailed information on the Türk Ocakları, see Üngör, *The Making of Modern Turkey: Nation and State in Eastern Anatolia (1913–1950)* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 180–217.

products of 'intrigues of the Armenian revolutionaries who represented only a small portion of the whole nation'. He expressed his gratitude to 'the victorious Turkish army' that liberated the country and requested that the Turkish deputies distinguish between the activities of the revolutionaries and 'the good Armenians'.[51] Following the remarks of Sdepan Karayan, Hamdullah Suphi responded in his speech that Karayan could speak only for himself and not on behalf of the whole Armenian nation, arguing that the Armenians living abroad were of a different mindset than those living in Istanbul. However, Hamdullah Suphi argued that Armenians and Turks had no other choice but to reunite and co-exist, even though the past could not be forgotten entirely. Along similar lines, Ruşen Eşref insisted that the Armenians outside Turkey thought and acted differently from Turkish Armenians. He stated that, while it was not possible to forget 'the misdeeds of the Armenians', the Association would enhance reconciliation. It is evident in the statements of Ruşen Eşref and Hamdullah Suphi that, from the Turkish perspective, the Armenians were responsible for several '*fenalıklar*' (disservices) against the Turkish nation, which the Turks could not easily forgive; therefore, the Armenians should make efforts to 'win their hearts'. At this point, it is important to pay attention to the words of Mosdijyan Efendi, who took the floor following the remarks of Ruşen Eşref. He passionately expounded how the majority of Armenians in Istanbul and Anatolia did not participate in 'the destructive activities against the Turkish nation' but in fact shared the same destiny as their Turkish neighbours:

> It is impossible to separate Armenians from Turks. The coldness between us is a reality, but this shall not stay too long. The Armenians demand nothing but justice and equality. Sure, some Armenians wish to be independent, but the voice of the majority wants to attach their fortune and misfortune to the fate of the Turks. Therefore, I kindly ask the dear deputies to spread this idea among their friends during their meetings.[52]

In his concluding remarks, Spedan Karayan thanked the Turkish deputies for joining the event and sharing their remarks. He stressed that the Turkish deputies had shown generosity with their statements,

[51] *Verchin Lur*, Թուրքեւհայ Բարձրացման Միութեան Երէկի Հաւաքոյթը (Turkyewhay Partsratsman Miutyan Eregi Havakuytě) [Yesterday's Meeting of the Association of Turkish–Armenian Fraternity], 21 July 1923, no. 2856.

[52] Ibid.

which – while not intended to comfort or persuade Armenians – were expressed sincerely. According to *Verchin Lur*, many of the members in the hall shed tears and cried together: 'Long live the Turkish nation, long live Mustafa Kemal Paşa!'[53]

The Armenian community leadership and intellectuals, many of whom had supported the Allies before 1922, and the Armenian press now supported the re-establishment of the Turkish–Armenian friendship. Previously, Armenian papers such as *Verchin Lur* and *Piwzantion* had published articles supporting the Armenian state in the Caucasus and the Allies. Without external support, Armenians now moderated their demands and accommodated the host state. Ottoman Armenians, in a situation similar to other minority groups in other states, altered their political position following the disappearance of external support and began to accommodate the newly established Turkish state.

End of the Lausanne Conference

While the Armenian community in Istanbul organised activities to promote Turkish–Armenian friendship, the discussions at Lausanne between the delegations were coming to an end. The outcome of the first round of discussions, which took place from November to January, was fruitless, as the Turkish delegation, under the leadership of İsmet Paşa, refused to accept the judicial, financial, and economic terms. Although the Turkish delegation expressed willingness to accept the Straits Convention, the Maritza River frontier in Thrace, the future negotiation regarding Mosul, and the clauses regarding minorities, they would not accept the financial and judicial clauses.[54] The Lausanne Conference entered a hiatus in January 1923. Even after the Conference paused in January, the Turkish Armenian community continued to pledge its loyalty to the Turkish National Movement. Bishop Kevork Arslanyan met with Adnan Bey and informed him that 'the Armenian community wants

[53] *Verchin Lur*, Թուրքեւհայ Բարձրացման Միութեան Երէկի Հաւաքոյթը (Turkyewhay Partsratsman Miutyan Eregi Havakuytě) [Yesterday's Meeting of the Association of Turkish–Armenian Fraternity], 21 July 1923, no. 2856; Ekmekçioğlu, *Recovering Armenia,* 112.

[54] Suzanne Elizabeth Moranian, 'The American Missionaries and the Armenian Question' (PhD thesis, University of Wisconsin–Madison, 1994), 351–2.

to live in Turkey with the Turkish brothers by blocking the influence of the foreign intrigues'.[55]

When Vatslav Vorovsky, a diplomat from the Soviet delegation, was assassinated in May 1923 in Lausanne, Swiss officials warned the Turkish authorities that, as the head of the delegation, İsmet Paşa could also be a target for assassination by those wishing to disrupt the peace talks.[56] The Turkish press immediately accused the Armenian revolutionaries of plotting assassinations when rumours of threats against the Turkish delegation spread. The subsequent wave of anger and loathing from the press is illustrated in the Turkish satirical magazine, *Akbaba* (Vulture), which published the following poem:

One eyebrow of İsmet Paşa
Worth 100,000 Armenian heads
You should consider that
All those tears will go to waste
İsmet Paşa is the moon in the sky
Pull yourself together Baron Hay!
If any of you look at him disdainfully
My wrath may reserve a share for all of you
. . .
Now I fly away
By golly, behave well!
Or I would shred your carcasses.[57]

These sentiments published in *Akbaba* reflect the increasing antipathy and hatred towards Armenians within the Turkish public. Nevertheless, the Conference recommenced in April after three months of uncertainty.[58] No assassination attempts or plots were reported by the officials. The Turkish delegation managed to convince the Allied Powers to agree to their terms. Regarding minority rights, the Turkish delegation agreed to guarantee non-Muslim minorities' rights to be

[55] *İkdam*, 'Ermeni Patrik Vekili Yeni Konferansta Hiçbir Teşebbüslerinin Olmadığını Söylüyor' [The Patriarchal Locum Tenens Says They Do Not Have Any Initiatives at the New Conference], 26 April 1923, no. 9379.

[56] *Tevhid-i Ekfar*, 'Ermenilerin de İsmet Paşa'ya Bir Suikast Hazırladıkları Tahakkuk Etti' [It Is Proven that the Armenians Prepared an Assassination Plan for İsmet Paşa], 12 May 1923, no. 3760.

[57] *Akbaba*, 'Akbaba'nın Notası' [Akbaba's Note], 17 May 1923, no. 47; *Arawod*, 11 June 1923, no. 90.

[58] Kaye Suzanne Pasley, 'The Collapse of British Imperialism in Turkey 1919 to 1923' (PhD thesis, Mississippi State University, 1998), 358.

educated in their native language, to practise their religion freely, and to maintain patriarchates, schools, and charitable organisations.[59] However, the request to allow the return of Armenian refugees to Turkey was not accepted. İsmet Paşa emphatically stated that the Turkish government was ready to welcome 'innocent' Armenians who had not been involved in political activities, but the Armenians who acted against the Turkish National Movement during the war and Armistice period would not be permitted to return.[60]

Indeed, both the Allied Powers and Turkey protected their economic and territorial self-interests. The Armenian question had produced neither practical nor economic gains for the Entente. Tired with the negotiations regarding the establishment of an Armenian National Home, Curzon grabbed İsmet Paşa's hand while the latter was leaving the meeting hall, asking, 'My General, do you find this little funeral ceremony for the Armenian question to be excessive?'[61] The British delegation was well informed by British intelligence regarding the clandestine instructions that the Turkish delegation was receiving from Ankara.[62] Thus, they were aware of the delegation's position on the issues, including the denial of the establishment of an Armenian National Home. Ultimately, the Turkish delegation's strategy for the Armenian topic succeeded, and the word 'Armenian' did not appear in the Treaty of Lausanne. After the Treaty was signed, the delegation of the Entente's 'small ally', the Armenians, conveyed its disappointment to the Allied Powers by sending a protest letter in which they declared the Treaty to be fiction.[63]

When İsmet Paşa and the Turkish delegates returned to Turkey, prominent members of the Armenian community in Istanbul – including Kevork Arslanyan, the patriarchal locum tenens; Harutyun Mosdijyan, president of the Civil Council; Sdepan Gurdikyan; and Dr Andre Vahram – welcomed them in Çatalca and congratulated them for their 'victorious agreement' in Lausanne.[64] Mosdijyan

[59] Ekmekçioğlu, *Recovering Armenia,* 94; Öke, *The Armenian Question*, 204–5.
[60] *Tanin*, 'Ermenileri Avdeti Meselesi' [The Issue of Armenian Repatriation], 9 June 1923, no. 236.
[61] Marashlian, 'The Armenian Question', 742; Şevket Süreyya Aydemir, *Tek Adam: Mustafa Kemal (1922–1938)*, vol. 3 (Istanbul: Remzi Kitabevi, 2010), 109.
[62] Pasley, 'The Collapse of British Imperialism', 359.
[63] Ekmekçioğlu, *Recovering Armenia,* 97; Marashlian, 'The Armenian Question', 754.
[64] *75. Yılda Türkiye Ermenileri*, 3.

awarded a gold medal to İsmet Paşa for his efforts. *Tevhid-i Efkar* (Unity of Ideas) noted that during the Armenian delegation's speech, the Turkish members in the hall ridiculed and laughed at the Armenians' presentation.[65]

On 29 October 1923, the Turkish Parliament assembled in Ankara to proclaim the establishment of the Republic of Turkey. Subsequently, the pro-Turkish approach of the Turkish Armenian community reached its peak in the early years of the Republic. In August 1924, the Association submitted a petition to İsmet Paşa stating that the Armenian community wished to waive its minority rights, designated by the Treaty of Lausanne.[66] Following the declaration of the Republic, in parallel with the political developments within Turkey, Turkish Armenians also became ardent supporters of the Turkish National Movement.[67] For instance, *Arawod* (Morning) published a portrait of Mustafa Kemal on its first page, with a caption reading, 'The respectable president of the Republic of Turkey: *Gazi* (veteran) Mustafa Kemal Paşa, for whom each Armenian has unalterable respect and on whom an unlimited reliance'.[68] On 26 December 1924, the opening ceremony of the Pera branch of the Association started with the 'March of Sakarya', the lyrics of which praised the victory of the Turkish army against the Greeks as well as the leader of the movement, Mustafa Kemal.[69] The growing support for the pro-Turkish position of the Turkish Armenians is best illustrated by the example of Dr Yaghubyan, who, in an interview with *Akşam*, stressed that the Turkish Armenians wanted to be 'pure Turks' and to continue living in fraternal harmony with Turks.[70]

[65] *Tevhid-i Efkar*, 'Murahhaslarımıza Huduttan Istanbul'a Kadar Fevkalade Samimi ve Coşkun Tezahürat Yapıldı' [Our Delegates Were Welcomed with Enthusiastic Demonstrations], 11 August 1923, no. 3806.

[66] Malhasyan, 'Istanbul'da 1922 Yılında Kurulan Türk-Ermeni Teali Cemiyeti ve Faaliyetleri' [The Activities of the Association of Turkish–Armenian Fraternity: Istanbul, 1922], 52.

[67] Ekmekçioğlu, *Recovering Armenia*, 106–17.

[68] *Arawod*, Գազի Մուսթաֆա Քէմալ Փաշա (Gazi Mustafa Kemal Pasha) [Veteran Mustafa Kemal Paşa], 26 October 1924, no. 166.

[69] Malhasyan, 'Istanbul'da 1922 Yılında Kurulan Türk-Ermeni Teali Cemiyeti ve Faaliyetleri' [The Activities of the Association of Turkish–Armenian Fraternity: Istanbul, 1922], 52.

[70] Ibid., 58.

Figure 4.4 The portrait of Mustafa Kemal Paşa (*Arawod*, 26 October 1924) Courtesy of the National Library of Armenia

Conclusion

The majority of Ottoman Armenians who before 1922 had been pro-Allied and pro-Armenian independence began to change their viewpoint to one of reconciliation and friendship with the newly formed Turkish government after experiencing the disappointments caused by the Allied Powers in Cilicia and in the Caucasus, as well as the defeat of the Greek army in Anatolia, which handed the Turkish National Movement complete control of the country. Armenian papers – such as *Verchin Lur*, *Zhoghovurti Tsaynĕ*, and *Arawod* – published articles promoting the importance of Turkish–Armenian friendship. A new Armenian intellectual/bourgeoisie group, which believed that Armenians' salvation was closely linked to the fate of Turkey, emerged

within the community. This group of intellectuals and businessmen, with the help of the Armenian press, created a new discourse in the community. Indeed, those Ottoman Armenians who stayed in the newly established Republic began to identify themselves as Türk Ermenisi (Turkish Armenians), blaming the Armenian diaspora, claiming that it 'worked with the Western powers' to 'harm the Turkish state'. Turkish Armenians employed new rhetoric in which they labelled the Armenians who lived outside of Turkey 'a vehicle serving the Western intrigues'. Accommodating the ruling Nationalist government was a strategic move to protect the existence of the community at a time of political uncertainty and insecurity. The members of the Association of Turkish–Armenian Fraternity and the Armenian Patriarchate referenced 'the perceived past friendship' between Turks and Armenians when approaching Turkish politicians, intellectuals, and society.

With no external state support to defend Ottoman Armenians' rights and with the Armenian state in the Caucasus defeated and forced to sign agreements with the Ankara government and the Bolsheviks, Ottoman Armenians had little choice. The French and the British ended their occupation and retreated, and the Greek army in Anatolia was defeated by the Nationalist forces. In such an atmosphere, the Armenian community that stayed in Istanbul altered its political position to protect its physical, cultural, and social existence within the new borders of the Republic of Turkey, choosing to accommodate the oppressive host state.

Conclusion: Fractured Futures

The Demise of an Empire

When the Ottoman delegation signed the Treaty of Sèvres in August 1920, it marked the end of an era and the end of an empire which had ruled vast territories across the Middle East, the Balkans, and North Africa for six centuries. The Allied Powers allowed the preservation of an Ottoman state in a geography that included a few cities in the inner region of Anatolia, such as Ankara, Sivas, and Samsun. The treaty stipulated the creation of separate Armenian and Kurdish states under the protection of the Allies in the eastern Anatolian provinces; the Greek state was awarded Eastern Thrace and the Izmir coast; the Mesopotamia region was divided between the French and the British; the Dardanelles and Marmara Straits would be jointly designated an international zone; finally, vast regions in southern Anatolia would be marked as a 'zone of influence' of the French and Italians. Thus, with the Treaty of Sèvres, the Allied Powers degraded the already disappearing features of the Ottoman Empire, its territorial scope and ethno-religious diversity. As the Allied Powers promised the non-Turkish communities their own nation-states, what remained of the Ottoman Empire was reduced to a scrap of land. The Armenian community's struggle, as analysed in this book, is to be situated within this broader context.

Indeed, the territorial expanse of the Ottoman Empire had been decreasing since the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and its demographic profile consequently changed following the mass migrations – voluntary and forced – of Muslim and non-Muslim populations from the lost territories to those lands which were still under the control of the Ottomans and vice versa. As the Ottoman territories shrank due to war and independence movements, the remaining population became ever more homogeneous. As the percentage of Muslims rose significantly, non-Muslims, who had previously composed half of the population – at times even a majority – in the Ottoman Empire at the beginning of the

sixteenth century, correspondingly declined inside the Empire's borders. During the nineteenth century, the Muslim population in the Ottoman Empire further increased, as various Muslim populations from the Caucasus and the Balkans resettled in the inner parts of Anatolia, some fleeing massacre and persecution. Though of different ethnic backgrounds, the native Muslims of Anatolia welcomed these newcomers by recognising them as part of a united *ümmet/ummah* (Islamic community). Thus, while the Ottoman Muslim community embraced the newly arrived Muslims as imperial cohabitants, the marginalisation of non-Muslims, particularly the native Christian populations of Anatolia, was gaining momentum in the late nineteenth century. Although empires exist with 'the maintenance of difference and distinction',[1] the Ottoman Empire was at this point already losing its ability to do so.

The nineteenth-century reforms were intended to revitalise the Empire by resolving the inegalitarian aspects of the millet system. Yet, the claims of egalitarian incorporation failed to prevent 'differences' from metastasising into 'threats' in the eyes of the millet-i hakime – Muslims of the Sunni denomination, in particular. With the abandonment of Ottomanism during the Abdulhamid regime – or, more accurately, the transformation of Ottomanism into an idea of Islamic unity between Ottoman subjects – the Ottoman Sultan accelerated the process of erasing 'difference' within Ottoman society. While the already powerful millet-i hakime were further elevated by state policies, non-Muslims found themselves as 'outsiders' with no place within the imperial fold. Wars and conflicts hardened 'the group boundaries and externalised the social divides' within Ottoman society.[2] The Turkish-speaking Muslim community, absorbing the narratives of Muslim refugees who fled from the Balkans and the Caucasus, began to establish a unified collective identity of 'us' (Turkish-speaking Muslims) versus 'them' (non-Muslims).

[1] Valerie A. Kivelson and Ronald Grigor Suny, *Russia's Empires* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 3; Alexander J. Motyl, 'Thinking about Empire', in *After Empire: Multiethnic Societies and Nation-Building: The Soviet Union and the Russian, Ottoman, and Habsburg Empires*, Karen Barkey and Mark von Hagen, eds. (Oxford: Perseus, 1997), 20; Karen Barkey, 'Changing Modalities of Empire: A Comparative Study of Ottoman and Habsburg Decline', in *Empire to Nation: Historical Perspectives on the Making of the Modern World*, Joseph W. Esherick, Hasan Kayalı, and Eric Van Young, eds. (Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006), 174.

[2] Siniša Malešević, 'Obliterating Heterogeneity through Peace: Nationalisms, States and Wars, in the Balkans', in *Nationalism and War*, John A. Hall and Siniša Malešević, eds. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 259.

Anatolia became the geographic core of the Empire and maintaining control of these provinces was to be accomplished by any means, including coercion, mass violence, and even genocide.[3]

The very foundation of the Ottoman Empire, once a multi-ethnic and multi-religious society co-existing, although not always harmoniously, throughout a vast land, was in crisis at the dawn of World War I in 1914. With the rise of pan-Islamist and nationalist policies and the abandonment of the idea of establishing egalitarian Ottomanism, the Ottoman Empire's very status as an 'empire' was in danger, and its disintegration was all but inevitable.[4] The Crimean War (1854–6), the Russo-Ottoman War (1877–8), and the Balkan Wars (1912–13) accelerated the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, but the fatal blow was World War I.[5]

The end of the Ottoman Empire was catastrophic for both Muslims and non-Muslims. From the beginning of the Balkan Wars in 1912 to the end of the Greco-Turkish War in 1922, the demographic composition of cities stretching from the shores of Albania to the shores of Lake Van was violently altered by means of evacuations, forced removals, and genocide. The post-war Izmir of 1922 bore little resemblance to its pre-war self. Likewise, the city of Bitlis, which historically included a vibrant Armenian population, emerged as a ghost town after the Armenian genocide of 1915 and World War I. According to estimates, the population of Anatolia declined by 20 per cent during wartime.[6] It is at this calamitous juncture that this book begins, excavating the past to bring to light the experiences of the Armenian community in the final years of the Ottoman Empire.

Chaos and Opportunity: The Armistice Period

By the end of World War I in 1918, two great empires (Ottoman and Habsburg) had collapsed, the Russian Empire was remade into a socialist state, and the German Empire emerged as a democratic

[3] Joseph W. Esherick, Hasan Kayalı, and Eric Van Young, eds., *Empire to Nation: Historical Perspectives on the Making of the Modern World* (Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2006), 7.

[4] Kivelson and Suny, *Russia's Empires*, 77; Çağlar Keyder, 'The Ottoman Empire', in *After Empire: Multiethnic Societies and Nation-Building: The Soviet Union and the Russian, Ottoman and Habsburg Empires*, Karen Barkey and Mark von Hagen, eds. (Oxford: Perseus, 1997).

[5] Esherick, Kayalı, and Van Young, *Empire to Nation*, 19.

[6] Reşat Kasaba, 'Dreams of Empire, Dreams of Nations', in Esherick, Kayalı, and Van Young, *Empire to Nation*, 215.

republic. Even though the Allied Powers, mainly the British and French, were victorious, they too suffered consequences brought about by the war, such as the independence struggles in Ireland, Egypt, Iraq, India, Afghanistan, Burma, Algeria, Syria, Morocco, and Indo-China.[7] The effects of the war were felt globally, with the economic crisis and the loss of countless lives leaving indelible scars on the collective memory of nations. Following the fall of the empires, the rise of Wilsonian and Leninist notions of self-determination leading to secessionist struggles in all corners of the world, and the minority crises that followed the establishment of new nation-states, the Armistice years were arguably more chaotic than the wartime.[8] In this book, I draw attention to the Armenian and Ottoman Turkish press to analyse the struggle of Armenians during this turbulent post-war period, when an empire heaved its last breath and its constituents searched for new paths of survival.

To understand and compare the specific case of Ottoman Armenians during the Armistice period, my arguments benefit from the theories of ethnic bargaining and security dilemma. In the context of the larger literature of minority reactions, however, the accommodative strategy of the Armenian community does not come as a surprise. Ellen Comisso argues that, in general, the minority populations in Eastern Europe adhered to a pragmatist/accommodationist policy, rather than engaging in insurrection, until the dissolution of the Ottoman and Habsburg empires in 1918. The majority of the members of these ethnic groups served loyally in the armies of the empires before and during World War I.[9] The great majority of the Habsburg subjects, for example, fought for the victory of the Habsburg Empire. Poles from the Habsburg Empire fought against Poles from Russia; Habsburg Serbs fought against the Serbs of the Kingdom of Serbia; and Habsburg Italians and Habsburg Romanians fought loyally even after Italy and Romania joined the

[7] Robert Gerwarth and Erez Manela, eds., *Empires at War 1911–1923* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 1.

[8] Carole Fink, 'The Minorities Question at the Paris Peace Conference: The Polish Minority Treaty, June 28, 1919', in *The Treaty of Versailles: A Reassessment after 75 Years*, Manfred F. Boemeke, Gerald D. Feldman, and Elisabeth Glaser, eds. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 252.

[9] Ellen Comisso, 'Empires as Prisons of Nations versus Empires as Political Opportunity Structures: An Exploration of the Role of Nationalism in Imperial Dissolutions in Europe', in Esherick, Kayalı, and Van Young, *Empire to Nation*, 140.

Entente.[10] Dennison Rusinow demonstrated that even the most radical nationalist groups within the empires strategically avoided advocating for independence until the outcomes of the war were becoming clear within political circles.[11] Yet, as the war drew to a close, the same ethnic groups took advantage of the opportunities presented by the new political climate, becoming more vocal in their calls for independence.[12] For instance, Aviel Roshwald illustrated the case of Czechs who did not put forth a nationalist/secessionist agenda until 1918. After the Russian Empire collapsed and the United States entered the war, the Czech political elite began to demand independence. This coalition read the shifting geopolitical winds and adjusted their position at the time they deemed most opportune to achieve their political goals.[13] As with the nations in Eastern Europe, the majority of Armenians, as loyal subjects, joined the Ottoman military to fight for the Empire's victory. However, in 1918, spurred by the Empire's collapse, they believed that it was their 'moment' to campaign for independence.[14] How they interpreted and pragmatically benefited from the geopolitical developments has been demonstrated in this book.

The initial years of the Armistice period, particularly the activities of the Armenian community in regard to the Wilsonian principles and its struggle for self-determination, is a critical period to analyse. In 1918, tired of endless and costly wars, the European powers increasingly envisioned one goal: the establishment of worldwide peace and security. The two competing ideologies, Lenin's socialism and Wilson's liberalism, utilised separate frameworks to reach the same end, the idea of self-determination.[15] Wilson argued that the

[10] John Connelly, *From Peoples into Nations: A History of Eastern Europe* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2020), 333.

[11] Wesley Hiers and Andreas Wimmer, 'Is Nationalism the Cause or Consequence of the End of Empire?', in *Nationalism and War*, John A. Hall and Siniša Malešević, eds. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 222.

[12] Comisso, 'Empires as Prisons of Nations', 159.

[13] Hiers and Wimmer, 'Is Nationalism the Cause', 222.

[14] For self-determination struggles of different ethnic groups during this 'Wilsonian moment' see Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).

[15] Leonard V. Smith, 'Empires at the Paris Peace Conference', in *Empires at War 1911–1923*, Robert Gerwarth and Erez Manela, eds. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 258; Connelly, *From Peoples into Nations*, 331.

post-war settlement should be a 'peace without victors' and that each nation should have a place in the soon-to-be-established new world order. Wilson's proposal was to create a 'community of nations' to preserve peace and international security through the League of Nations' efforts.[16] Though Wilson himself was no longer president of the United States, his surname acquired its own significance as a symbol of hope for all peoples seeking to establish independent nation-states, to the extent that Wilson was regarded as akin to a saint by some in Europe.[17] Poles, Yugoslavs, and Czechoslovaks established offices in Paris to promote their cases for independence to the British, French, Japanese, and Americans.[18] Armenians, too, as the 'small ally' of the Allied Powers, sent envoys to Paris to advocate for an independent Armenian state in the eastern provinces of the Ottoman Empire. As demonstrated in Chapter 1, Ottoman Armenians established relations with the Allied Powers and were on track to attain independence at the time of the signing of the Treaty of Sèvres. While the Armenian press was publishing maps of a 'United Armenia' state, the Allies left the demarcation of the border to President Wilson.

This political atmosphere, however, changed significantly with the rise of the Turkish National Movement in Anatolia in 1919, triggered primarily by the Greek forces' occupation of Izmir. The Nationalist authorities successfully convinced other non-Turkish Muslim groups to join their struggle against the Allied occupation and the claims for independence of non-Muslim millets, mainly the Armenians and the Romioi. Chapter 2 detailed how the atmosphere of insecurity experienced by Armenians, generated by the genocide of 1915, persisted during the Armistice, as the Turkish National Movement fought the occupying forces. Violence against non-dominant populations during a war of independence was not unique to the case of the Turkish National Movement. In the fog created by the lack of state control following the demise of empires, paramilitary organisations committed violence against minorities, at times

[16] Thomas J. Knock, 'Wilsonian Concepts and International Realities at the End of the War', in *The Treaty of Versailles: A Reassessment after 75 Years*, Manfred F. Boemeke, Gerald D. Feldman, and Elisabeth Glaser, eds. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 114.

[17] Knock, 'Wilsonian Concepts', 128.

[18] Connelly, *From Peoples into Nations*, 332.

with the public's support.[19] For example, while the Irish Republican Army rebelled against the British in 1919–21, the majority of the Irish public accused the Irish Protestant groups of being an 'enemy within'.[20] Similarly, the Polish authorities accused Jewish men of collaboration with the Bolsheviks and executed them without any major protests from the general public in 1918–19.[21] Armenians in Anatolia, survivors of the genocide, found themselves again in a cycle of violence amid the escalation of clashes between Turkish Nationalists, Allied forces, and those armed militias who remained loyal to the Ottoman Sultan. From its inception, the Turkish National Movement made clear that its struggle was against non-Muslims. For instance, the election of non-Muslim deputies to the first assembly of the Turkish National Movement was forbidden by the Heyet-i Temsiliye (Committee of Representation), the body which organised the election of deputies to the assembly. At the same time, the Turkish National Movement presented itself as the defender of the rights of Ottoman Muslims, regardless of their ethnic background.[22]

Post-war peace settlement initiatives of the Allies gave hope to various ethnic groups in the former Ottoman Empire that they would gain independence. In the case of Armenians, both public opinion and policymakers in Western Europe and the United States were sympathetic and supportive. It has been established in Chapter 3 that the Armenian community leadership re-evaluated these signals of support sent by the Allies after the Turkish Nationalists mounted an offensive on the Republic of Armenia, with the Allies responding that their 'cannons cannot reach Mount Ararat' and that no assistance would be provided to Armenians. Despite the encouragement and support Armenians had received from the Allies for self-rule in the region, this amounted to a betrayal. Coupled with the French forces' retreat from the Cilicia region, Armenians were left once again in a 'state of vulnerability'. Now, as a 'minority' group in the soon-to-be-established

[19] Julia Eichenberg, 'The Dark Side of Independence: Paramilitary Violence in Ireland and Poland after the First World War', *Contemporary European History* 19(3) (2010), 232.
[20] Ibid., 237. [21] Ibid., 238.
[22] Ceren Lord, *Religious Politics in Turkey: From the Birth of the Republic to the AKP* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 50.

Republic of Turkey, the Armenian leadership in the Empire decided to accommodate the new regime's policies and re-establish relations.

A New Nation-State and the Path to Survival

The markers of Turkish nationalism in the Armistice period were chiefly language and religion rather than ethnicity and race. Speaking Turkish and being Muslim were the two primary denominators for inclusion. Those who spoke Turkish but were not Muslim faced exclusion. However, Muslims who did not know the Turkish language were accepted conditionally, contingent upon learning Turkish and assimilating into Turkish culture.

National identity in the newly established Republic of Turkey was consequently heavily influenced by religion.[23] This 'new' Turkish identity introduced and propagated by the Turkish National Movement was inclusive enough to win the support of various non-Turkish Muslim ethnic groups in Anatolia such as the Kurds, Circassians, Laz, Pomaks, Albanians, Zaza, and Arabs; however, this 'inclusivity' excluded non-Muslim communities who were deemed 'enemies of the state' such as the Romioi, Armenians, and Jews.[24] Thus, non-Turkish-speaking Muslim ethnic groups were 'assimilable', while non-Muslims, regardless of their knowledge of the Turkish language, were a 'threat' to national unity.[25] Particularly during the Armistice years of 1919 to 1923, the Turkish National Movement employed rhetoric identifying religion as the defining characteristic of its iteration of nationalism. The legacy of the Ottoman millet system persisted through the Republican years, with Islam and the Turkish language remaining the demarcators of Turkish identity.[26] In this period, the non-Muslim millets of the Ottoman system

[23] Following World War I, in the newly established Irish and Polish states, being Catholic was the central pillar for the national self-perception. In Ireland and Poland, Jews, Prussian Protestants, Ukrainian Orthodox, and Irish Protestants were excluded from the boundaries of national self-perception. In the eyes of Polish authorities, the Jews betrayed their country during World War I and there was no place for them within the organic body of nation. Similarly to Poland and Ireland, the newly established Republic of Turkey also constructed its national identity primarily on the foundation of religion. See Eichenberg, 'The Dark Side of Independence', 244–8.

[24] Gregory J. Goalwin, 'Understanding the Exclusionary Politics of Early Turkish Nationalism: An Ethnic Boundary-Making Approach', *Nationalities Papers* 45 (6) (2017), 1151.

[25] Ibid., 1163. [26] Lord, *Religious Politics in Turkey*, 59.

ebbed into non-existence until only the Muslim millet remained. The military and political leadership, together with the Ottoman Turkish press and intellectuals, portrayed their cause as a movement of Ottoman Muslims against Western imperialism. How did Armenians, a non-Muslim community now centred in Istanbul, survive this political turmoil?

As has been argued in Chapter 4, co-optation and accommodation was the survival strategy of the Armenian community. Closely following international geopolitical developments and accepting the realities of realpolitik, the Armenian community leadership sought new means to re-establish relations with Turkish society. With the abolishment of the Sultanate and the promise of a nation-state based on civic and secular principles, the Armenian community in Istanbul was guardedly optimistic about their future in the new republic. Yet, even though the Turkish National Movement envisioned a nation governed by civic and secular principles, ethnicity and – more importantly – religion would in fact continue to characterise the 're-envisioned' Turkish identity.[27] Turkish intellectuals argued that language and religion were the two strongest pillars of Turkish identity.[28] Those who could meet the national identity criteria would be welcomed into Turkish society, but those who remained outside of the identity borders – namely, non-Muslims – were to be excluded and regarded with suspicion.[29] Thus, under such circumstances, existential survival itself was the imperative through these chaotic years and the Armenian community leadership in response began to shift – or create a public image that it was shifting – its political approach to accommodate the increasingly hostile state policies.

The history of the Armistice period has been an insufficiently studied topic in recent historiography, besides a few scholars, failing to attract enough attention from scholars of both late Ottoman and Armenian history. Neither works focusing on the history of the Armenian genocide nor those on World War I and Ottomans have devoted enough space to the struggle of Armenians during the Armistice years, except for a few works such as Lerna Ekmekçioğlu's piece.[30] However, as

[27] Gregory J. Goalwin, '"Religion and Nation Are One": Social Identity Complexity and the Roots of Religious Intolerance in Turkish Nationalism', *Social Science History* 42 (2018), 165.

[28] Ibid., 173. [29] Ibid., 174.

[30] In recent years, the Armistice period has received scholarly attention. Lerna Ekmekçioğlu's 2016 book *Recovering Armenia: The Limits of Belonging in*

I have attempted to demonstrate in this book, a detailed analysis of the Armenian and Ottoman Turkish popular press that was circulated in the waning days of the Ottoman Empire offers a unique perspective to revise our understanding of public sentiment towards the fate of the Armenians at this time. In that sense, the detailed analysis of post-genocide Armenians during the Armistice period challenges the historiography and calls for a reconception of our understanding of the history of the Armenian genocide, the Ottoman Armistice, and the demise of the Ottoman Empire.

The end of the Ottoman Empire also signalled the end of Western Armenian life in Anatolia. Following World War I, the genocide, and

Post-Genocide Turkey (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2016) is a pioneering work on the Armistice and Republican periods. Ekmekçioğlu analyzes the period of 1918–35, focusing on the post-genocide Armenian community in Istanbul. The book regards gender as 'an analytical tool and a site of discourse through which the post-genocide Armenian community in Istanbul perceived and organized itself'. Ekmekçioğlu argues that the post-genocide Armenians in Turkey became the 'secular dhimmis of the Republic' and this 'secular dhimmitude' ensured the communities survival in subsequent decades. Talin Suciyan's 2015 book, on the other hand, addresses the Republican years. *The Armenians in Modern Turkey: Post-Genocide Society, Politics and History* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2015) is a product of research on the Armenian press of the period. Suciyan's work sheds light on the state policies of the early Republican period. Suciyan places the concept of 'post-genocide habitus of denialism' at the centre of her analysis and argues that the state created a 'habitus of denial' and it was reproduced by the larger layers of society, with those Armenian intellectuals who asked for equal and democratic rights excluded and even imprisoned. Hratch Tchilingirian's article entitled 'The "Other" Citizens: Armenians in Turkey between Isolation and (Dis)Integration' provides a comprehensive overview of the treatment of the Armenian community in the Republic of Turkey from its establishment to the contemporary decades. See Hratch Tchilingirian, 'The "Other" Citizens: Armenians in Turkey between Isolation and (Dis)Integration', *Journal of the Society for Armenian Studies*, 25 (2016), 123–156. Rubina Peroomian's pioneering book, on the other hand, analyses the effects of the genocide of 1915 on the formation of Armenian identity through literary expressions. See Rubina Peroomian, *And Those Who Continued Living in Turkey after 1915: The Metamorphosis of the Post-Genocide Armenian Identity As Reflected in Artistic Literature* (Yerevan: Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute, 2008). Armaveni Miroğlu's 'Armenian Community of Istanbul' and Sirvart Malhasyan's thesis on the Association of Turkish–Armenian Fraternity can also be considered as part of this burgeoning literature. See Armaveni Miroğlu, 'Ստամբուլի Հայ Համայնքը (1923–1939)' (Stambuli Hay Hamaynkě (1923–1939)) (PhD thesis, National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia, Institute of History, Yerevan, 2011) and Sirvart Malhasyan, 'Istanbul'da 1922 Yılında Kurulan Türk-Ermeni Teali Cemiyeti ve Faaliyetleri' (MA thesis, Istanbul, 2005).

the subsequent evacuations of Cilicia, Izmir, and the south Marmara regions during the Armistice period, the villages, towns, and cities of Anatolia suffered the loss of the majority of their Armenian inhabitants. Those Armenians who survived and remained in Istanbul and Anatolia forged new paths through this political turmoil, living as 'Turkish Armenians'. While the Armenian community was at the whim of the political winds, forced to accommodate the Turkish state's oppressive policies after the Allied withdrawal, it endured the shifts in position and rhetoric. Following the Young Turks' attempted existential erasure, the resultant diaspora dispersed to all corners of the globe, thus ensuring the safety and preservation of Western Armenian language, literature, culture, and identity.

Appendix: The Ottoman and Armenian Newspapers

The Armenian paper *Zhamanag* (The Times), which continues to be published today in Istanbul, was first published in 1908 by Misak Kochunyan. It was popular among Istanbul Armenians, with many leading Armenian authors serialising their novels in the columns of *Zhamanag*. The circulation of the paper was the largest among all the Armenian newspapers. It carried no political affiliation from its founding until the beginning of World War I. *Zhamanag*'s uninterrupted print run during the Armistice period makes it the perfect mirror of the Armenian community's political, social, and cultural engagement during that time.

Jagadamard (The Battle), *Ariamard* (The Battle of Braveness), and *Artaramard* (The Battle of Justice) were subsequent incarnations of *Azadamard* (The Battle of Freedom), a newspaper which was first published in 1909 after the revolution as an organ of the ARF.[1] Prominent Armenian intellectuals such as Rupen Zartaryan, Hagop Siruni, and Kegham Parseghyan all contributed to *Azadamard* as editors.

Verchin Lur (The Latest News) was published in Istanbul from 1914 to 1930.[2] Owned by Hracheay Der Nersesyan, the paper's editorial board consisted of Hagop Der Hagopyan, Hovhannes Asbed, Lewon Sateryan, Ardashes Kalpakjyan, Vahan Toshigyan, and the famous Armenian author Yervant Odyan.[3] The paper officially remained 'neutral and independent', with no political affiliation. However, the arguments supported in the paper's columns were often in line with Ramgavar Liberal Party policies.[4] *Verchin Lur* was one of the most

[1] Garegin Levonyan, Հայոց Պարբերական Մամուլի Լիակատար Ցուցակ հայ Լրագրության [The Armenian Periodical Press: A Complete Catalogue] (Yerevan: Melkonyan Fond, 1934), 57.

[2] Ibid, 81.

[3] Zakarya Mildanoğlu, *Ermenice Süreli Yayınlar, 1794–2000* [The Armenian Periodicals 1794–2000] (Istanbul: Aras Yayıncılık, 2014), 131.

[4] A. A. Kharatyan, Արեվմտահայ Մամուլն Իր Պատմության Ավարտին *(1900–1922)* (Arevmdahay Mamuln Ir Patmutyan Avardin) [The Western Armenian Press at the End of Its History] (Yerevan: Patmutyan Institut, 2015), 391.

popular papers among the Armenian community in Istanbul, with a circulation of 10,000 during and after World War I.

Giligia (Cilicia) was first published in Adana in 1919 and continued until 1921, with copies appearing every two to three days.[5] Owner G. Der Aprahamyan assembled an editorial team of Dikran Dzamhur, Minas Veradzin, and Lewon Mozyan, whose editorial views were close to those of the ARF.[6] *Giligia* is an important source for this study, as it reflects the developments in the Adana region during the Armistice period.

Owned by Hrant Mamuryan and edited by Suren Bartewyan, *Arewelyan Mamul* (The Orient Daily) was first published in 1871 in Izmir by Madteos Mamuryan and later renamed *Tashink* (The Pact) in 1909, before ceasing publication in 1914 as a result of World War I. In 1919, the pro-Ramgavar Liberal Party newspaper resumed publication for one year following the war.[7] After *Tashink* ceased publication in late 1919, the paper was again resurrected as *Arewelyan Mamul* and continued to be published as such until 1922.[8] It is crucial to analyse this paper, in both of its iterations, as it documents the news and developments regarding Izmir and the surrounding areas. Additionally, its strong opposition to the ARF provides valuable insight into the political dynamics of the period within the Armenian community. *Arewelyan Mamul-Tashink* criticised the Soviet Armenian government and drew attention to Bolshevism, portraying it as a danger.[9] It is possible to find political discussions between *Arewelyan Mamul-Tashink* and *Koyamard* (The Battle for Existence), an Izmir-based publication of the ARF.[10] In addition to *Arewelyan Mamul-Tashink*, *Horizon* (Horizon) was also published in Izmir from 1919 to 1922.[11] Similar to *Arewelyan Mamul-Tashink*, the paper reflected the developments in Izmir and its surrounding areas, including the fraternal relationship between the Armenian and Romioi communities of Izmir. However, while *Horizon* claimed to be

[5] Levonyan, Հայոց Պարբերական Մամուլի Լիակատար Ցուցակ հայ Լրագրության [The Armenian Periodical Press: A Complete Catalogue], 99.
[6] Mildanoğlu, *Ermenice Süreli Yayınlar* [The Armenian Periodicals], 155.
[7] Ibid., 105. [8] Ibid., 45.
[9] Kharatyan, Արեվմտահայ Մամուլն Իր Պատմության Ավարտին [The Western Armenian Press at the End of Its History], 471–2.
[10] Levonyan, Հայոց Պարբերական Մամուլի Լիակատար Ցուցակ հայ Լրագրության [The Armenian Periodical Press: A Complete Catalogue], 106.
[11] Ibid., 101.

a neutral publication, it published news quoted from *Jagadamard* and the announcements of the ARF in its pages. Another important publication was *Koyamard*. In its inaugural issue in 1920, it explained the meaning of its name – the Ottoman Armenians had fought a battle for their very existence during World War I and there would now be a second battle for existence in the Armistice years.

Piwzantion (Byzantium) was published in Istanbul from 1896 to 1918 after obtaining special permission from Abdulhamid II. Piwzant Kechyan, the owner of the paper, pursued a moderate policy during the first years of publication. The paper had no political affiliation and remained neutral. The opinion editorials published in the paper regarding the Armenian massacres of 1894–6, which were optimistic about the future of the Armenian community in the Ottoman Empire, serve as examples of the moderate tone the paper sought.[12]

Arawod (The Morning) was published from 1909 to 1924 in Istanbul as a mouthpiece of the Ramgavar Liberal Party.[13] Owned and directed by Misak Suryan, *Arawod* strongly criticised the ARF for its policies during the Turkish–Armenian war in the Caucasus and its harsh opposition to the Soviet Armenian government.[14] The paper was one of the first Armenian newspapers to declare a pro-Turkish stance during the Lausanne Conference, believing in the possibility of reconciliation between the Turks and the Armenians.

Hay Tzayn (The Armenian Voice) was founded in Aleppo in 1918 by Setrag Gebenliyan before relocating to Adana.[15] It continued to be published through 1920 and reflected the news regarding the Armenian community in Cilicia.[16] In the first issue, the paper declared that its aim was to build a bridge between the local Armenians and the Turkish and Arab populations, as well as to assist diaspora Armenians in locating their relatives in the region. Even though the paper claimed to be neutral, the content remained pro-Ramgavar party. Gebenliyan also served as the editor of another paper during the same period, *Hay Tsaw* (The Armenian Pain),

[12] Kharatyan, Արեվմտահայ Մամուլն Իր Պատմության Ավարտին [The Western Armenian Press at the End of Its History], 60–1.
[13] Levonyan, Հայոց Պարբերական Մամուլի Լիակատար Ցուցակ հայ Լրագրության [The Armenian Periodical Press: A Complete Catalogue], 57.
[14] Mildanoğlu, *Ermenice Süreli Yayınlar* [The Armenian Periodicals], 100.
[15] Levonyan, Հայոց Պարբերական Մամուլի Լիակատար Ցուցակ հայ Լրագրության [The Armenian Periodical Press: A Complete Catalogue], 100.
[16] Mildanoğlu, *Ermenice Süreli Yayınlar* [The Armenian Periodicals], 149.

which was published in Adana from 1919 to 1921. *Hay Tsaw* was unique in that it was the only Turkish-language paper that used Armenian characters in the Armistice years.[17]

Yerewan (Yerevan) was published in Istanbul from 1918 to 1919.[18] Even though the paper had no official political affiliation, its editorial policy carried a strong nationalist bent, voicing support for the establishment of a '*Miatsyal Hayastan*' (United Armenia) and declaring itself 'the organ of free Armenians'.

Nor Gyank (The New Life) was published in Istanbul from 1918 to the end of 1919 by Yervant Der Andtreasyan, an intellectual who had worked in Armenian newspapers since 1880.[19] He was actively involved in the publications of *Masis*, *Tsaghik* (The Flower), *Arevelk* (East), and *Manzume-i Efkar* (The Verse of Ideas) before World War I. In *Nor Gyank*, he tried to draw public attention to the Armenian massacres while also criticising the CUP leaders.[20]

Zhoghovurt (The People) was published in Istanbul from 1918 to 1919 by Armenian intellectual Dikran Zawen.[21] The paper continued publication under the name *Zhoghovurti Tsaynĕ* (The Voice of People) until 1923. From 1920 to 1922, the paper was edited by the well-known Armenian poet Vahan Tekeyan.[22]

Yergir (The Country) was published by the Social Democrat Hnchagyan Party in Istanbul from 1919 to 1922. Unlike many other Armenian papers in Istanbul, the editorial policy of the paper was sympathetic towards Soviet Armenia. Because of this political position, the paper was strongly criticised by those in ARF circles who did not favour the Bolsheviks.[23]

İleri (Forward) was published in Istanbul from 1919 to 1924 by the brothers Celal Nuri (İleri) and Suphi Nuri (İleri). Strongly critical of the

[17] Ibid., 395.
[18] Levonyan, Հայոց Պարբերական Մամուլի Լիակատար Ցուցակ հայ Լրագրության [The Armenian Periodical Press: A Complete Catalogue], 90.
[19] Levonyan, Հայոց Պարբերական Մամուլի Լիակատար Ցուցակ հայ Լրագրության [The Armenian Periodical Press: A Complete Catalogue], 94.
[20] Kharatyan, Արեվմտահայ Մամուլն Իր Պատմության Ավարտին [The Western Armenian Press at the End of Its History], 360.
[21] Levonyan, Հայոց Պարբերական Մամուլի Լիակատար Ցուցակ հայ Լրագրության [The Armenian Periodical Press: A Complete Catalogue], 90.
[22] Ibid., 98.
[23] Kharatyan, Արեվմտահայ Մամուլն Իր Պատմության Ավարտին [The Western Armenian Press at the End of Its History], 382.

CUP and the Istanbul government, the paper openly supported the Ankara movement, publishing articles written by Mustafa Kemal as well as announcements from the Ankara government.[24]

Vakit (The Times) was published by Mehmet Asım (Us) and Ahmet Emin (Yalman) in Istanbul in 1917. Prominent Turkish authors such as Ziya Gökalp, Halide Edip, Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın, Reşat Nuri, and Ruşen Eşref wrote for the paper, which openly supported Mustafa Kemal's movement.[25]

Istanbul was published by Sait Molla in 1919 in Istanbul. Sait Molla was a member of the Anglophile Society,[26] which supported the British mandate over the Ottoman Empire.[27] *Istanbul* strongly opposed the Turkish National Movement and criticised the CUP's activities in its columns. The paper ceased publication after the victories of the Nationalist forces in Anatolia. Prominent poet Ahmet Haşim was an intermittent contributor to the paper.[28]

Alemdar (The Flag-Bearer) paper was published by Refii Cevat in Istanbul from 1909 to 1922. Refik Halit, a prominent Turkish author, wrote many articles criticising the Turkish National Movement under the pseudonyms 'Aydede' and 'Kirpi'. Muammer Asaf, Mustafa Sabri, Hafız İsmail, and Dr Selahattin – all of whom were strong opponents of the CUP and the Turkish National Movement – were contributors to the paper.[29] *Alemdar* was at the heart of the opposition during the Armistice period, calling the Nationalist movement 'brainless bands' and supporting the British mandate.

Following the war, the Ottoman newspapers *Peyam* (The News) and *Sabah* (Morning) merged and were re-established as *Peyam-ı Sabah* (Morning News) in 1920 by owner Mihran Efendi.[30] Editor-in-chief and renowned intellectual Ali Kemal strongly opposed the Turkish

[24] Nuri İnuğur, *Basın ve Yayın Tarihi* [History of Press and Publishing] (Istanbul: Çağlayan Kitabevi, 1982), 337–8.
[25] Ibid., 341.
[26] The Anglophile Society was founded in 1919 to promote the relationship between the British and the Ottomans. During the Armistice years, it supported the idea of a British mandate over the Ottoman Empire.
[27] İnuğur, *Basın ve Yayın Tarihi* [History of Press and Publishing], 341.
[28] Ibid., 342. [29] Ibid.
[30] Mihran Nakkashyan was an Armenian entrepreneur who was born in Kayseri in 1850. He received his training in typesetting in Istanbul and worked in several newspapers. In 1882, he bought the publishing rights of *Sabah* and became its owner. Mihran Nakkashyan left the country and immigrated to France in 1922 after selling his property, including the newspaper.

National Movement, openly characterising its followers as 'daydreamers'. His anti-Nationalist publications were so intense that he was lynched by a crowd in Izmit after the Nationalist victory against the Greek forces in 1922.[31] Accordingly, *Peyam-ı Sabah* is a crucial source to compare with the pro-Nationalist Turkish paper *Vakit* during the Turkish–Armenian War.

Yeni Gün (The New Day) was founded by Yunus Nadi in 1918. Soon after, the newspaper was forced to cease publication by the British forces because of its pro-Kemalist leanings. Yunus Nadi relocated his operations from Istanbul to Ankara, where he continued to publish the paper.[32] *Yeni Gün* openly supported the Ankara government during the Armistice period and provided crucial information regarding developments in the Nationalist circles.

[31] İnuğur, *Basın ve Yayın Tarihi* [History of Press and Publishing], 344.
[32] Ibid., 339.

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Index

Page numbers in *italics* indicate figures and maps; page numbers in **bold** indicate tables.